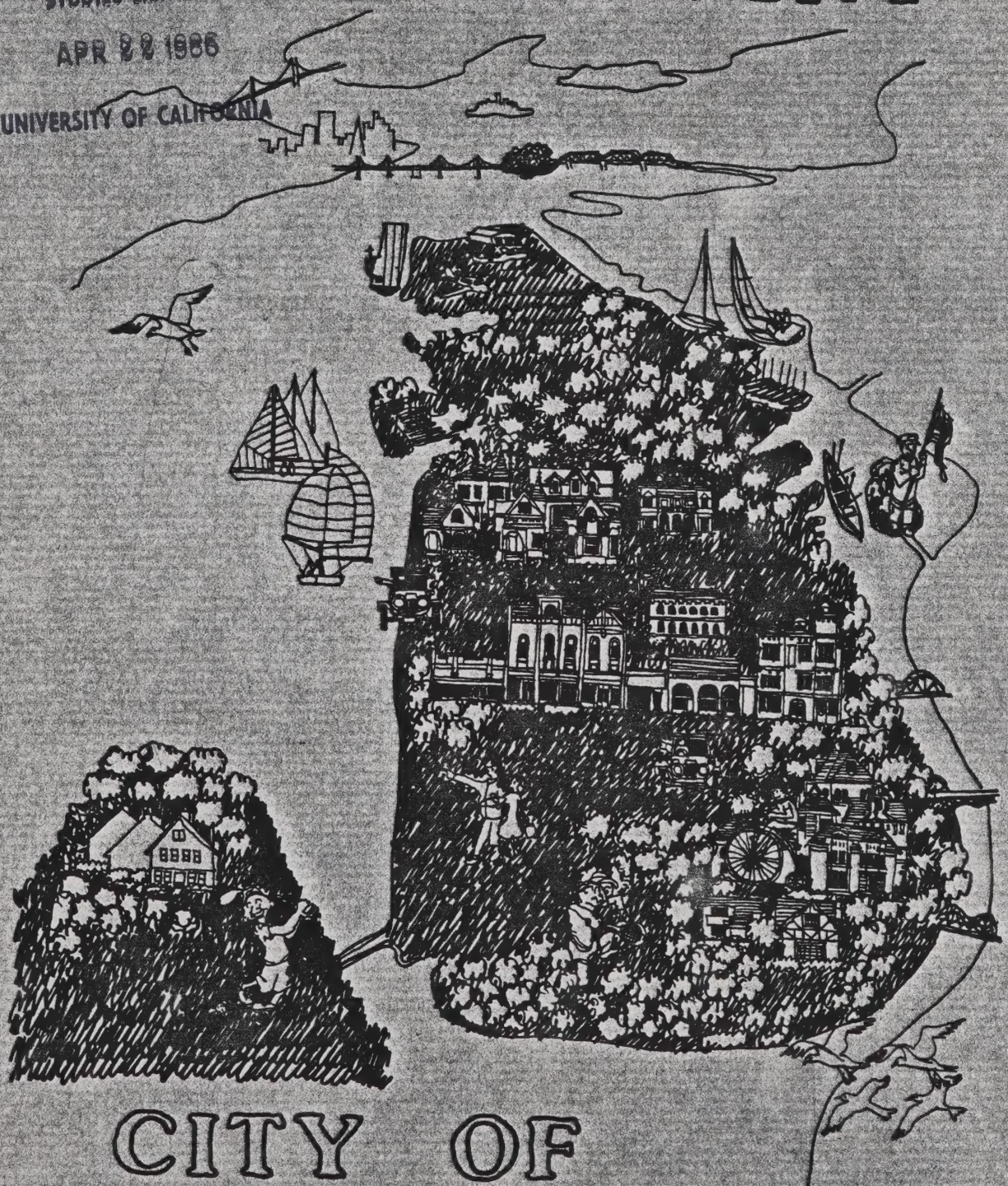
SCENIC HIGHWAYS ELEMENT



CITY OF ALAMEDA

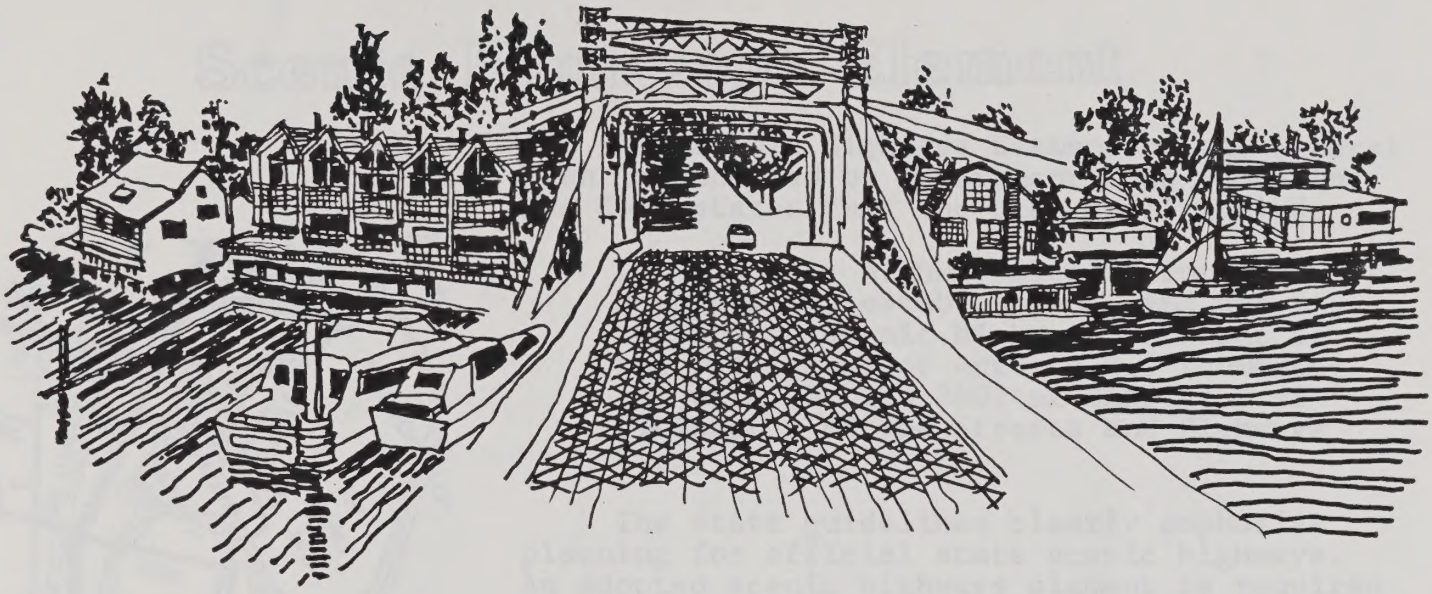
CITY OF ALAMEDA

SCENIC HIGHWAYS ELEMENT
FINAL DRAFT

CITY PLANNING DEPARTMENT

NOVEMBER 1975

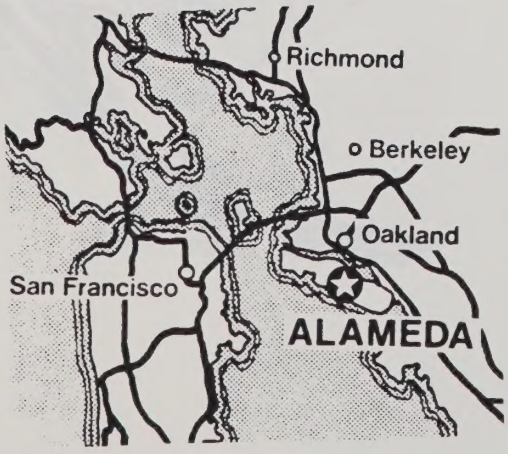
Table of Contents



HIGH ST. ENTRANCE

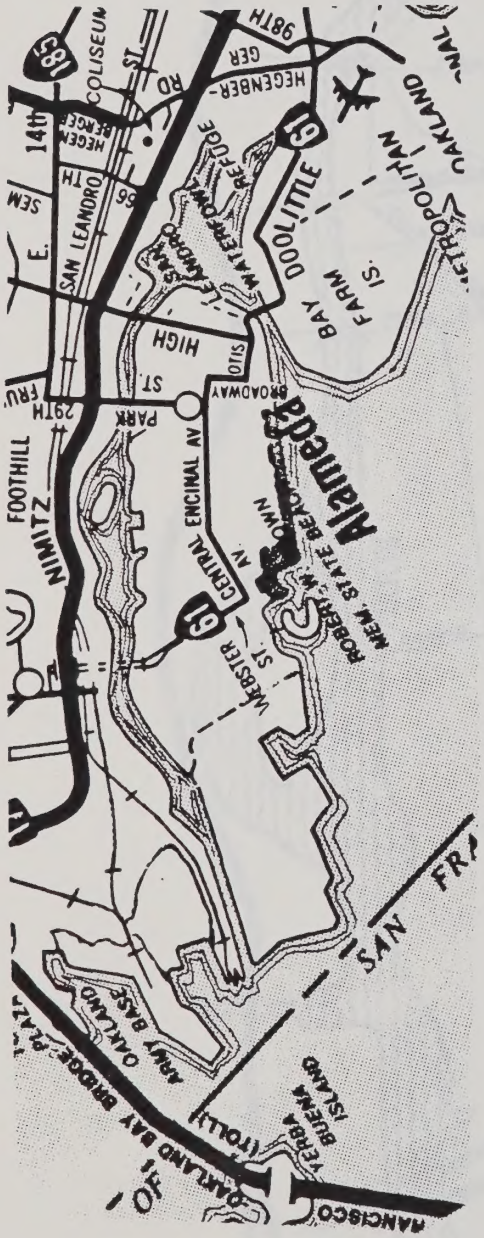
Introduction

A "Scenic Highway" is generally characterized as a roadway which traverses a visual corridor that is pleasant and enjoyable. The "view from the road" may vary in depth from the area immediately adjacent to the highway's right-of-way, increasing to a corridor near the highway, and finally to one that encompasses distant vistas. The features in the visual corridor may be either of natural landscaping or, as is common to most urban areas, man-made environments that are aesthetically pleasing.



This plan recognizes the expanded concept of a "scenic route" which may include mass transit routes, bikeways, trails, and pedestrian walks as well as highways and parkways. These alternate means of travel should be encouraged through measures providing enjoyable views in attractive surroundings.

Scenic Highways Element



The Scenic Highways Element of the General Plan is mandated by Government Code 65302 (h). The Code states that the plan shall include a

> . . . scenic highway element for the development, establishment, and protection of scenic highways pursuant to the provisions of Article 2.5 (commencing with Section 260) of Chapter 2 of Division 1 of the Streets and Highways Code.

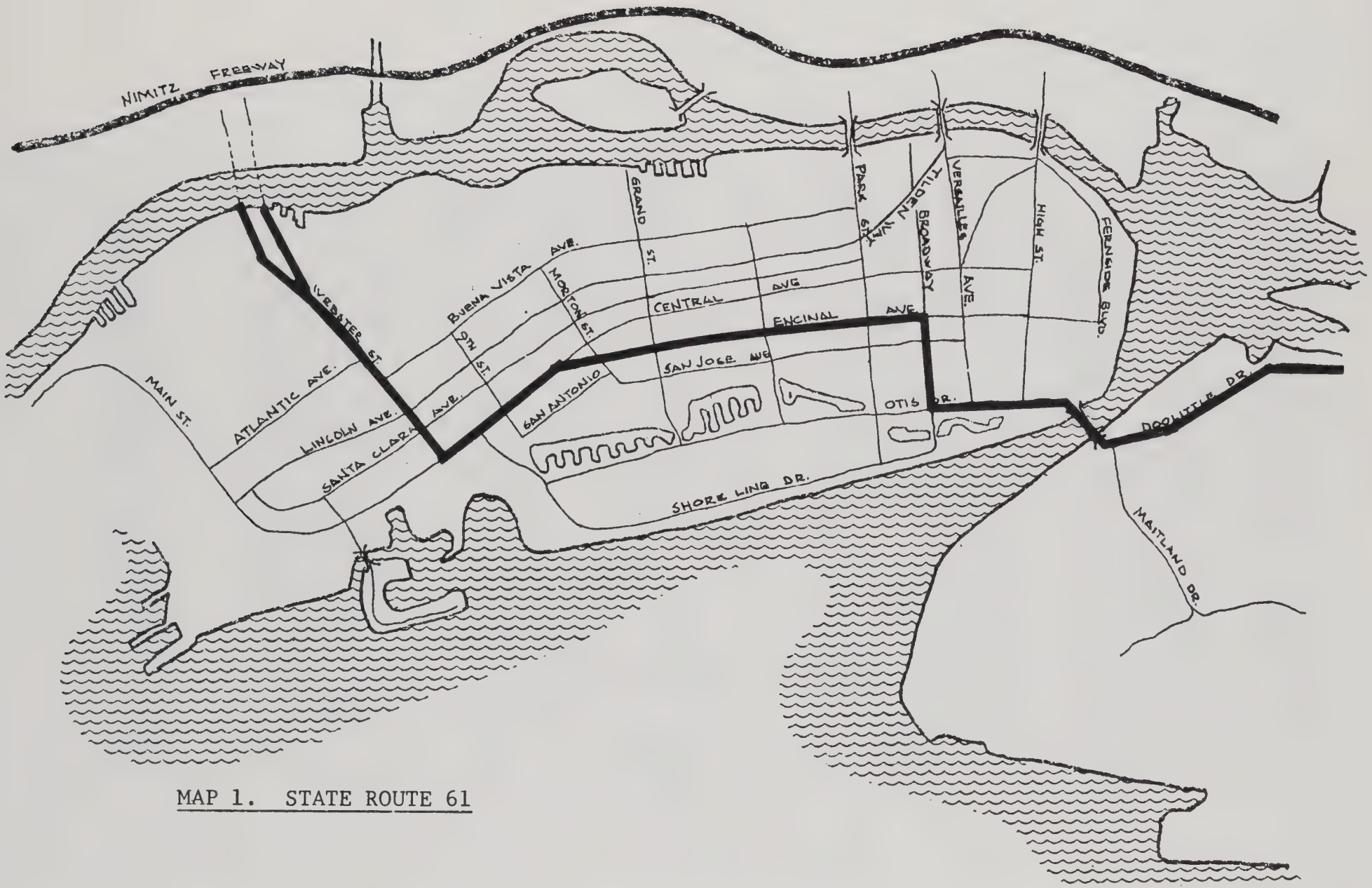
The State guidelines clearly emphasize planning for official state scenic highways. An adopted scenic highways element is required as the initial step leading toward state scenic highway designation. However, the guidelines indicate that the element may also be used by local agencies to develop and adopt local scenic routes, including bikeways.

Official State Scenic Highways

This designation serves two major purposes. First, it officially recognizes the merits of a route, and second, it provides mechanisms for the preservation of the scenic qualities of the route. Highways so designated are identified on State Highway maps. California's official policy on Scenic Highways is contained in its master plan entitled The Scenic Route: A Guide for the Official Designation of Eligible Scenic Highways.

The only roads presently eligible for such designation are those state routes included by the State Legislature in Section 263 of the Streets and Highways Code. There is only one State Route - 61* - in the City of Alameda (see Map 1); and it is not included in the State's Scenic Highway eligibility list. The Code does contain a procedure for local

* The Webster Street portion of the State Route was redesignated as Route 260 in May 1966. However, the entire route is still marked 61.



MAP 1. STATE ROUTE 61

jurisdictions to request State consideration of additional routes. However, the Scenic Highway Advisory Committee has stated:

> As a policy, the Advisory Committee will not recommend inclusion of short routes wholly located within an urbanized setting without natural scenic significance. If included by the Legislature, the Advisory Committee will not recommend official designation of such routes as scenic highways.**

When a proposed route for official state designation is reviewed, as part of the evaluation process (District Four of the California Department of Transportation), an unofficial rating schedule is used to aid in the preparation of recommendations (see Appendix I: Rating Schedule for Scenic Route). Presently, Route 61 does not appear to meet the criteria; although if its scenic qualities are improved, it might possibly be eligible for designation at some future date.

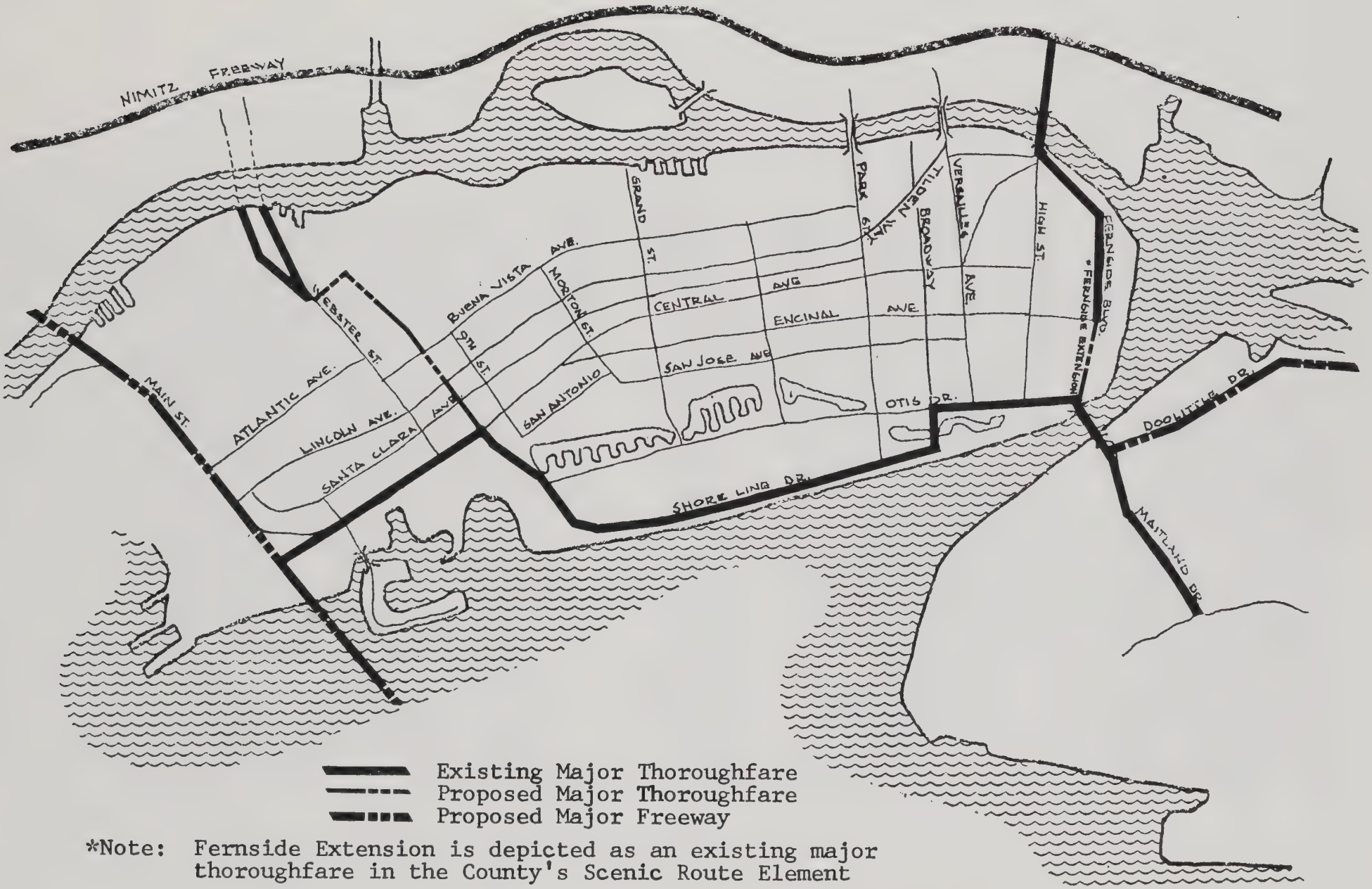
Official County Scenic Highways

This designation of eligible routes is contained in the Scenic Route Element of Alameda County's General Plan, which was adopted by the Board of Supervisors in May 1966. These routes are deemed to be of outstanding scenic quality or to provide access to scenic, recreational, historic, or cultural points of importance. The plan was intended to serve as a guide to communities within the County in developing their own scenic route plans, and as a means of coordination between cities in the development of a county-wide scenic route system.

There are a number of roadways in the City of Alameda that are included in the County's Scenic Element; these are shown on Map 2. However, the system was never actually adopted by the City of Alameda. Moreover, a large portion of the system is based on City roadways that have never been built. These will all be reevaluated as a part of

**The Scenic Route: A Guide for the Official Designation of Scenic Highways, July 1975, page 4.

MAP 2. ALAMEDA COUNTY GENERAL PLAN: SCENIC ROUTE ELEMENT FOR THE CITY OF ALAMEDA



*Note: Fernside Extension is depicted as an existing major thoroughfare in the County's Scenic Route Element

the revision of the Land Use/Circulation/Open Space Element. Until that has been done, the staff does not recommend that they be considered for inclusion in the Scenic Highway System. Other local scenic routes may qualify for county consideration. However, it should be noted that the Streets and Highways Code (Section 154) specifies that only county highways (of which there are none in Alameda) may be specified as official County Scenic Highways.

Local Scenic Routes

These are not eligible for either state or county designations; nevertheless, they are considered important and worthy of preservation and enhancement. Being an integral part of the City's circulation system, they serve the daily movements of residents, employees and visitors. However, this is not their sole function and they can help to unify a city by tying together its separate neighborhoods and providing pleasant travel experience.

In addition, entry and gateway features play an important role in establishing a community's imageability and deserve special consideration in any local scenic routes program.

Approaches for Alameda

If the State Guidelines are strictly interpreted, the Scenic Highways Element has a fairly limited relevance tor Alameda. However, the recommended approach is to use this element as an opportunity to protect and enhance the City's many scenic resources. By providing the means to experience its distinctive qualities, the City can project a positive image to visitors, and provide a new appreciation among its own citizens. The proposals for upgrading the scenic routes can also serve as initial steps in the maintenance and improvement of Alameda's overall physical environment. Alameda's unique setting and character, and its fine architecture, make possible a broad and balanced scenic route program, based on several different means of transportation.

Goal/Objectives

The basic goal of the Scenic Highways Element is to reaffirm and promote the City's image and "sense of place." To further that goal, five objectives have been identified:

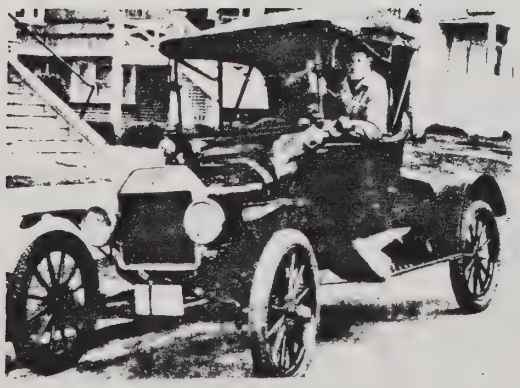
1. To improve the City's image through upgrading its gateways.
2. To develop a driving tour as a pleasant introduction to Alameda.
3. To encourage alternatives to the auto by providing a pleasing travel experience for those using other means of transit.
4. To promote an awareness and understanding of the City's noteworthy architecture.
5. To stabilize or increase property values through the addition and preservation of the community's attractions.

In order to achieve a balanced scenic route program, proposals have been developed in five areas:

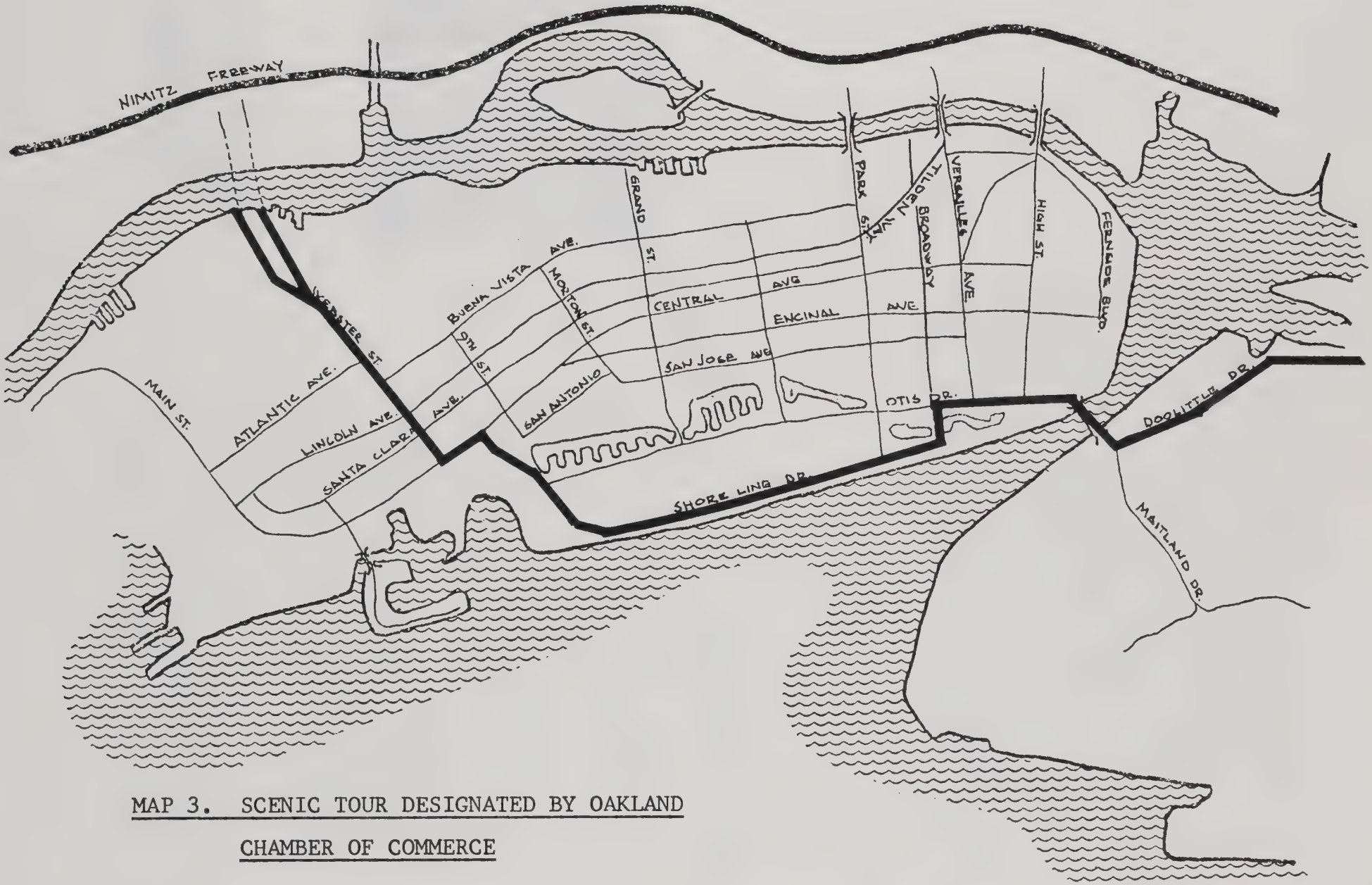
1. Scenic Driving Tour
2. Gateways to Alameda
3. Bicycle Route
4. Victorian Walking Tours
5. Public/Institutional Buildings Tour

Additional approaches which could be pursued in the future have also been included. It is recognized that there may be other specific projects and policies which could be undertaken to accomplish the basic objectives.

Scenic Driving Tour



A scenic driving tour of Alameda is clearly warranted. There are many attractive areas in the City which convey a very positive image, and which can serve as a pleasant introduction to the community's features. Such a tour would make an ideal subject for a brochure, and could be recommended to Alameda County for inclusion in the county's scenic route system.



MAP 3. SCENIC TOUR DESIGNATED BY OAKLAND CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

There is currently a designated driving tour through the City of Alameda. This "Scenic Tour," shown on Map 3, was determined and signs installed in September 1967 by the Oakland Chamber of Commerce. The signs (blue with an oak leaf emblem) are presently maintained by the Oakland Chamber. A detailed visual analysis of this tour has been prepared, and is included in the Appendix. It was found that the route incorporated an area of questionable scenic quality which actually presents a negative image of Alameda - notably Webster Street. However, the route could easily be improved by eliminating that section and adding others which better represent the quality of life in Alameda. An alternate sign marker could then be installed which is more evocative of the City's features.

BALLENA BAY

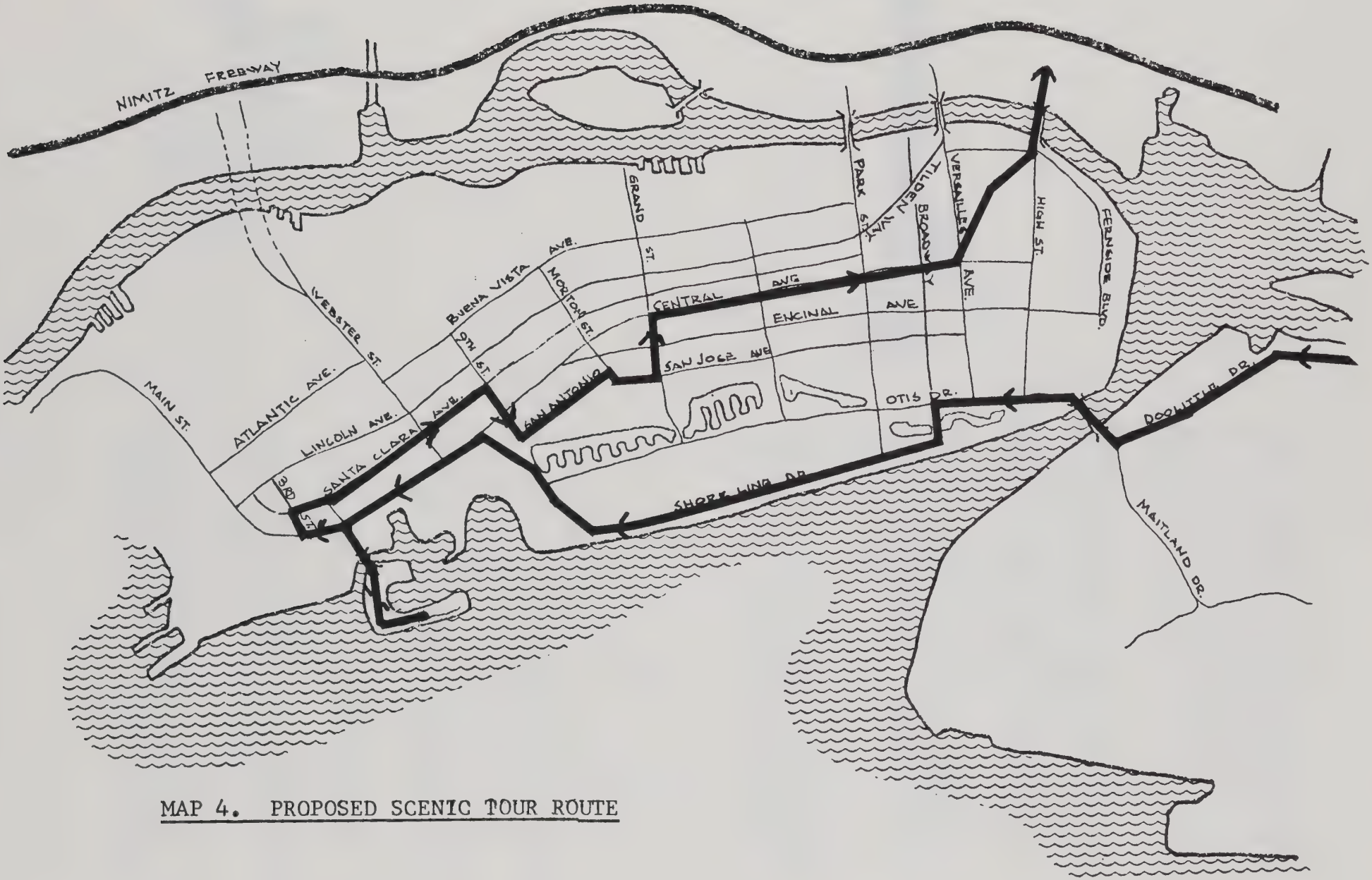
The proposed Scenic Driving Tour is shown on Map 4. Some of the scenic elements afforded by the route are listed below:

1. Alameda/Oakland border - This area has an open, suburban character which is enhanced by the Alameda Municipal Golf Course.

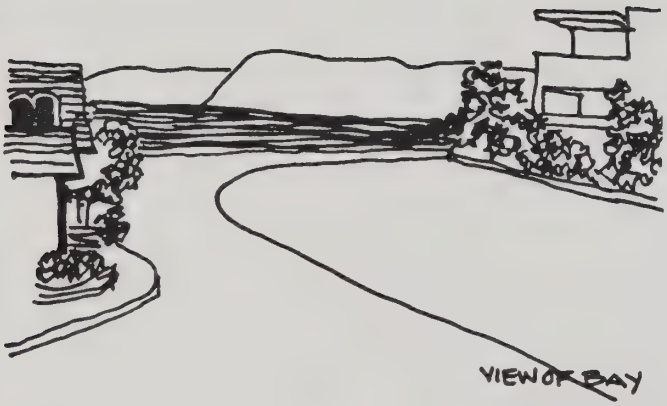
2. Shore Line Drive - Traveling this route in a westerly direction allows for a lengthy and expansive view of the San Francisco skyline.

3. Ballena Bay - This is a handsome contemporary development including apartments and townhouses oriented to a Bay front location. The drive through the development has the added attraction of a vista point with an unimpeded panoramic view of San Francisco.

4. Santa Clara Avenue - Traveling along this street allows the visitor to observe a typical neighborhood in the West End of the City. Various architectural styles in a tree-lined setting characterize this area of Alameda.



MAP 4. PROPOSED SCENIC TOUR ROUTE

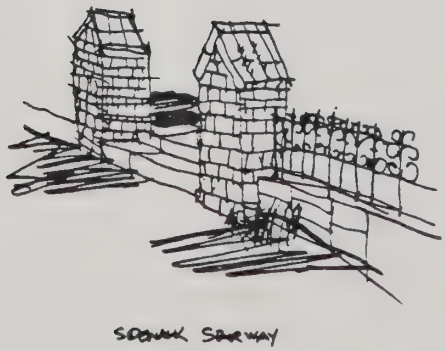


5. San Antonio/San Jose Avenues - These two streets are in the heart of the "Gold Coast" area of Alameda which is known for its fine Victorian homes in a lovely residential setting. Of special note is 1031 San Antonio Avenue, the former residence of Major Charles Tilden.

6. Central Avenue - This is a major east-west connector traversing the central part of Alameda. It is characterized by homes of diverse architectural design with mature street trees abutting the road.

7. Gibbons Drive - This is a route through the Fernside district which is characterized by picturesque settings and interesting styles of architecture.

8. High Street Bridge - Leaving Alameda from this exit provides the traveler with an aesthetically pleasing view of Oakland with the hills serving as a backdrop.



Specific Recommendations

These are all immediate actions that can be taken by the City to implement the development of a Scenic Tour:

1. The proposed route should be adopted by the City as its official Scenic Tour.

2. A sign should be developed which denotes the tour in a style that is symbolic of Alameda.

3. The Oakland Chamber of Commerce Scenic Tour signs should be removed and replaced by the City's signs.

4. The City should work with the appropriate agencies to upgrade the landscaping and maintenance of the beach adjacent to Shore Line Drive.

5. Informational signs should be installed along the beach to describe the ecology and wildlife of the area.

6. The City should choose one or more designs for attractive street light standards to be installed along the Scenic Tour route.

7. Upon the completion of the upgrading of Webster Street and Park Street, and the construction of the new Island Drive, these areas should then be given reconsideration for inclusion in the Scenic Tour.

8. The adopted Scenic Tour should be recommended to Alameda County for inclusion in its Scenic Route Element.

Policy Recommendations

The following general policies should be applied to the Scenic Driving Tour in order to protect its attractiveness as a scenic route. These are all means within the City's jurisdiction. They would also be applicable to any future extensions or revisions of the Scenic Tour.

1. Land Use - Protection of the Scenic Corridor should be considered in the revision of the Land Use Element and in preparation of area plans for specific neighborhoods.

2. New Construction - All projects occurring within the scenic corridor should be held to high standards of design through the design review process. The Planning Board and the Design Review Board should pay special attention to site planning and architectural and landscape design when evaluating any proposed projects along the designated Scenic Tour.

3. Signs and Advertising - The need to regulate signs in Alameda is quite apparent, and is essential along a scenic route network. The basic function of a sign is one of identification and not advertisement. For on-premise signs, the design, size, materials, texture, color and location should harmoniously relate to the surrounding environment. Off-premise signs are by nature advertisements and should not be allowed along scenic routes. (Billboards are, in fact, illegal in Alameda; although the abatement ordinance is being challenged in court.)

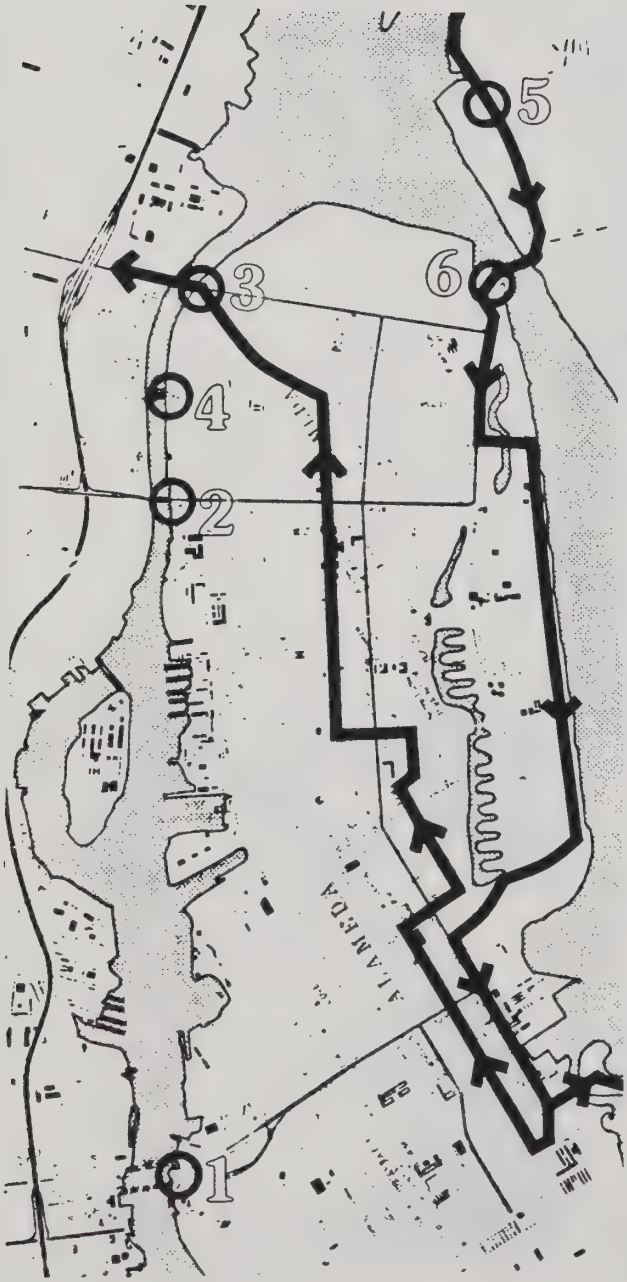
4. Public and Traffic Signs - The number of public and traffic signs along the scenic route should be kept to a minimum in order to reduce clutter. The city should attempt to reduce and simplify its traffic signs wherever possible.

5. Utility Lines - When visible, they segment the field of vision, thus intruding and negatively impacting the scenic view. To remedy this situation, the scenic corridor should be given high priority for the undergrounding of utility lines. New or relocated lines in scenic corridors should be placed underground.

6. Property Maintenance - Applicable building and health codes should be given substantial attention by the appropriate agencies in order to preserve the view along the scenic route.

7. Beautification Projects - Landscape beautification, particularly the planting of street trees, should be considered all along the Scenic Tour route.

Gateways



Gateways to a community are an important factor in forming a person's image of that place. They provide an initial visual contact upon which first impressions are based. An entryway should convey a "sense of place" and an image that defines a community's character. For Alameda, this is extremely important because of the City's island location, which most communities lack. When the traveler enters Alameda from a tunnel or a bridge, he knows that he "has arrived." This feature can be capitalized on, so that Alameda's gateways not only convey the sense of a distinctive community, but portray that community as an attractive place.

In the analysis of gateways, a good to excellent rating means that a "sense of place" is well defined, a positive image of Alameda is conveyed, structures are well maintained, landscaping is present and enhances the area, and signs and utility lines are not obtrusive. A fair rating indicates that the gateway could be improved with some upgrading and maintenance. Finally, a rating of "in disrepair" means that the area is in need of extensive upgrading before it can perform a beneficial function in promoting Alameda's image as a community.

The recommendations for the Webster Street and Park Street gateways are developed in more detail because of the critical need to revitalize these areas. They have been given priority designations because they carry the greatest volumes of daily vehicular traffic into and out of the City (see Map 8 and Appendix II), and have been assessed by the staff as being the two gateways most in need of amelioration. This added emphasis should help underscore the necessity of upgrading these areas in order to enhance Alameda's image.

1. WEBSTER STREET - POSEY TUBES

Entering Alameda

The condition of the most heavily traveled entrance, which has some visual assets, can generally be characterized as "in disrepair." The College of Alameda, especially its frontage landscaping, is visually pleasing. The industrial area is in complete disrepair and requires extensive upgrading. The surrounding land uses are generally industrial or institutional. Some utility lines are present, although not overly obtrusive. Signs are evident and unattractive, providing more clutter than information. The commercial signs on Webster Street are gaudy in appearance and detrimental to the City's image. Other visual problems include the rental trailers at the southwest corner of Webster and Atlantic, the litter along the Housing Authority property, near the bus shelter, and elsewhere, and the signs painted on building walls.

Leaving Alameda

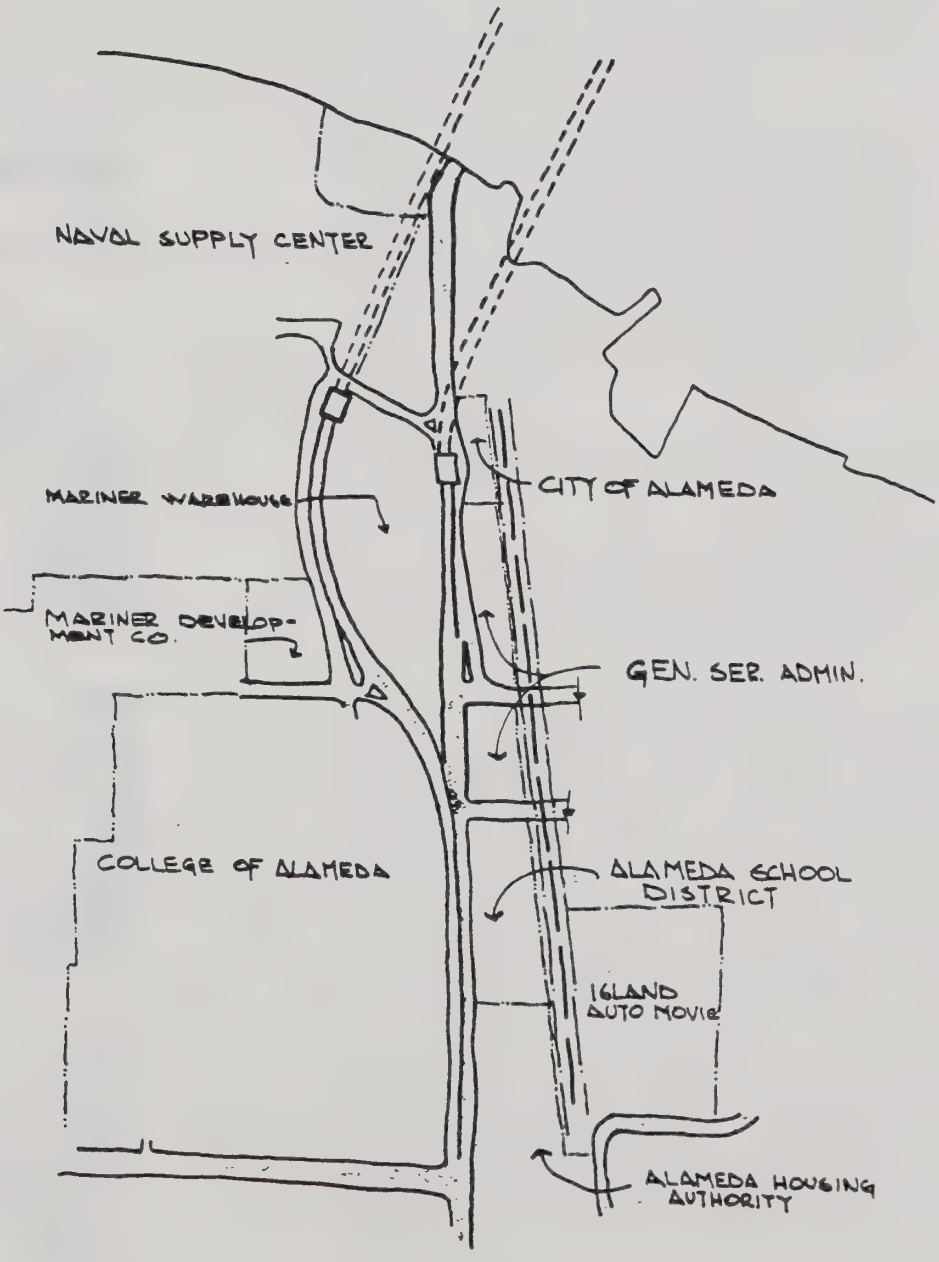
The condition and the land uses of the corridor are the same as described above. An added attraction is a pleasing view of Oakland and the hills. The existing directional signs are not obtrusive and provide the traveler with important information. Utility lines are not much of a problem except in the distant view towards Oakland.

Recommendations

1. The median strip should be replaced with attractive paving material such as brick or bomanite.

2. A row of street trees along the east side of Webster Street in front of the GSA and Alameda Unified School District properties would help to define the street as a gateway, and to relate it to the qualities of Alameda as a whole. Because of utilities under the street and the high speed of traffic, the trees

MAP 5. WEBSTER STREET GATEWAY - LAND OWNERS



would probably need to be small to medium in size. The Planning Department and the City Engineer should develop a joint proposal to recommend to the State Department of Transportation, which has jurisdiction over the State Route.

3. The College of Alameda should be encouraged to cooperate in the upgrading of the Webster Street gateway by landscaping their landfill area along Webster Street.

ALAMEDA BELT LINE

4. The City should purchase the Alameda Belt Line right-of-way and the abutting parcel of land between the right-of-way and The Royal Inn. This property would then be landscaped and developed into a bus stop/plaza area which could be integrated with any other development that may occur on the adjacent properties.

BUS SHELTER

5. An additional attractively designed bus shelter should be installed for the Webster Street/Tynan Avenue stop.

6. Additional trash receptacles should be installed at the existing and two proposed bus shelters on Webster Street.

SCHOOL DISTRICT & GSA PROPERTY

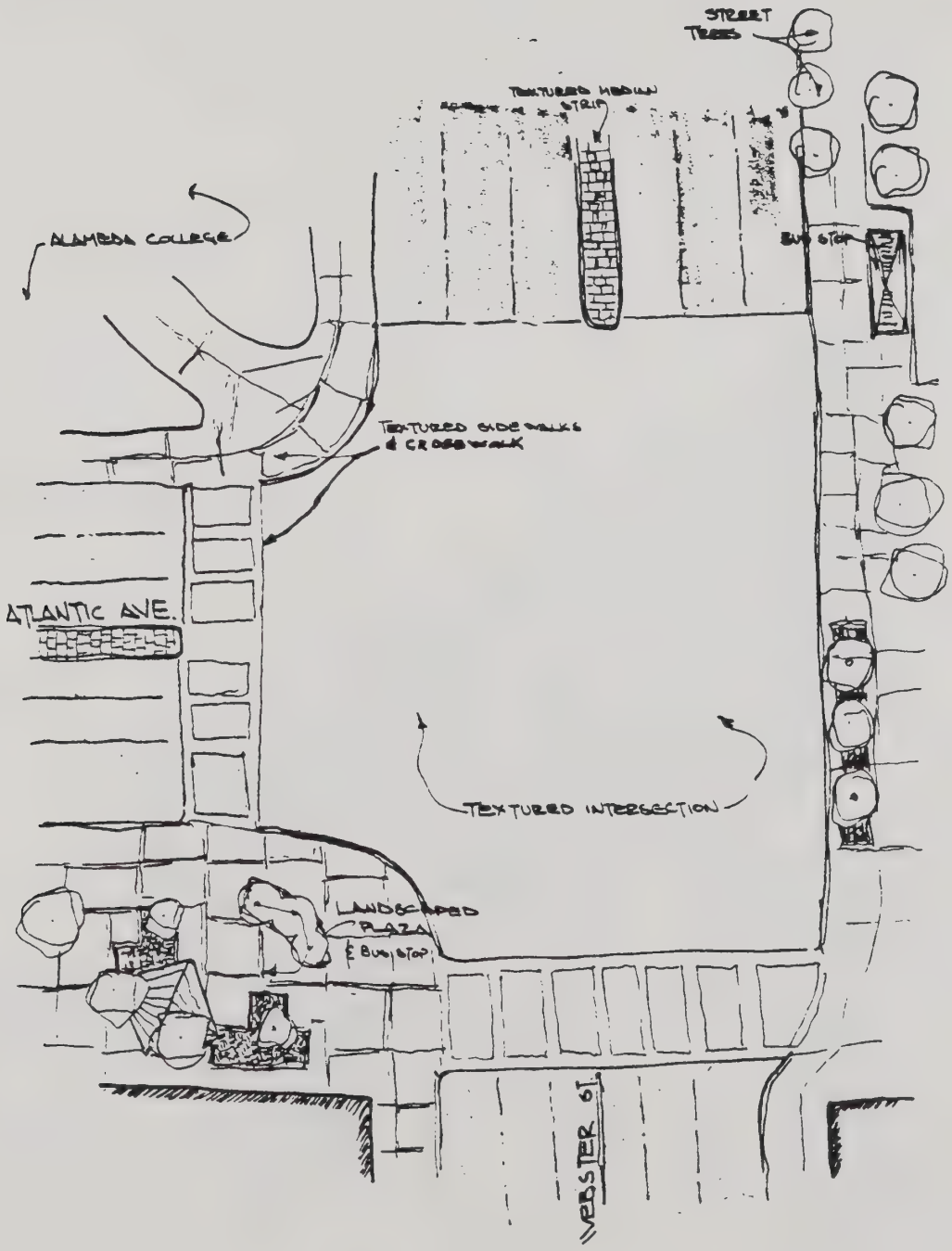
7. The City should work with the School District and GSA to screen and landscape their property. This will visually improve the gateway corridor but will not hinder any future development.

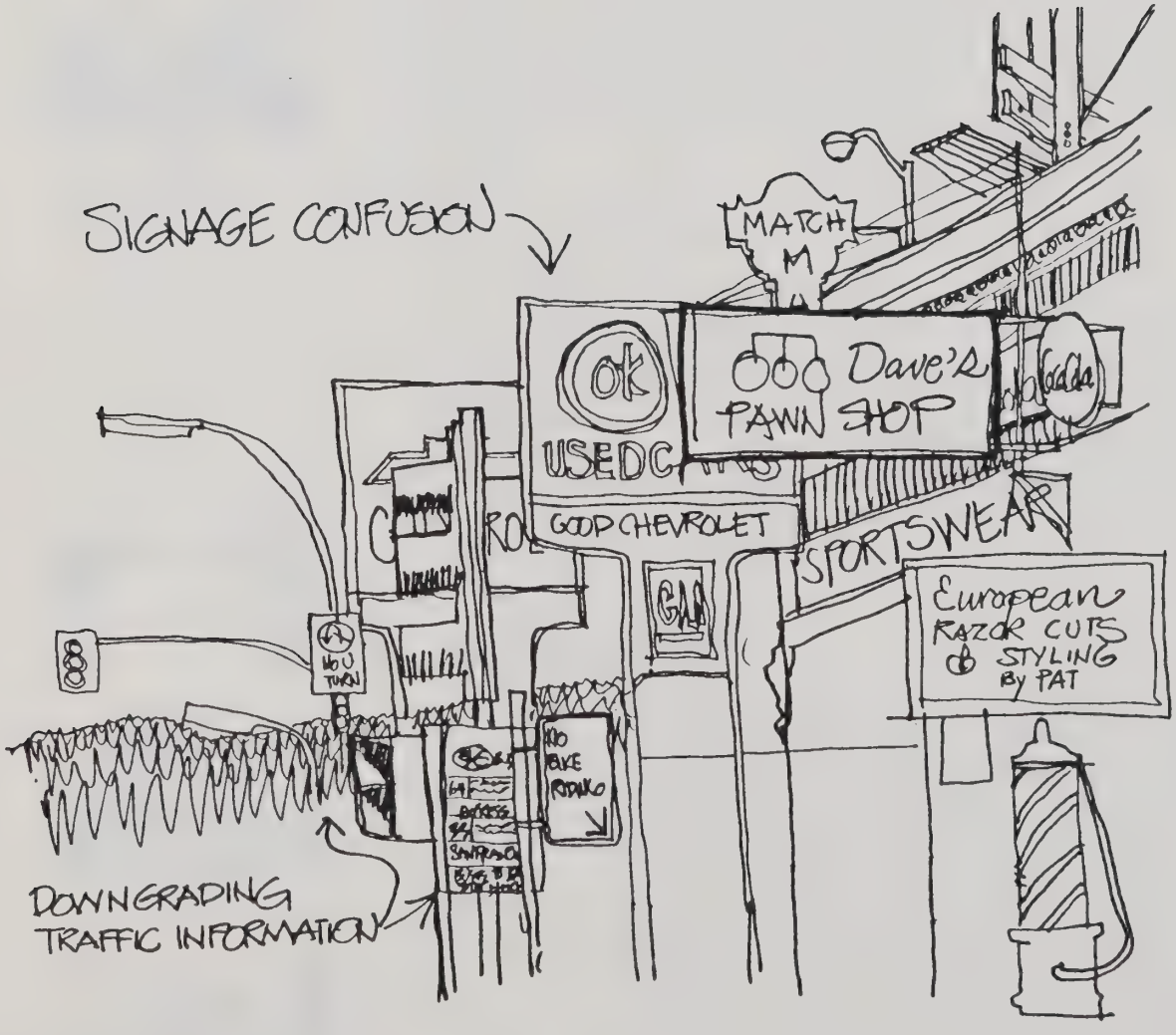
8. The Planning staff should work with the City Engineer to simplify the traffic signage at the Webster Street/Atlantic Avenue intersection.

9. The Utility Undergrounding Committee of the Planning Board should give priority to the undergrounding of electric wires along Bethlehem Avenue and the Southern Pacific Railroad tracks.

10. The curb and gutter should be completed on the east side of Webster Street, south of the electricity substation.

MAP 6. WEBSTER STREET GATEWAY - SKETCH PLAN

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NO BIKE RIDING
DOWNGRADING
TRAFFIC INFORMATION

2. PARK STREET BRIDGE

Entering Alameda

The condition of the entrance corridor ranges from fair to in disrepair. The bridge and estuary provide a visually pleasant first experience. Industrial and commercial activities characterize the adjacent land uses. Utility lines are present and noticeably obtrusive. The industrial sector bordering the estuary requires some type of amelioration. The jungle of signs, utility lines and street lights in combination with the industrial-commercial activities present an overall effect of confusion, congestion and clutter. A particular visual problem is the large number of auto dealers with their over-sized signs, multi-colored pennants, etc. Although there is a feeling of vibrance, the confusion, lack of character, and frequent traffic congestion, leave the traveler with no desire to stop and explore the area.

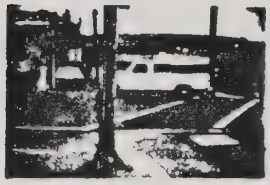
OVERSIZED SIGNS

Leaving Alameda

Fair to in disrepair describes this corridor. The points of visual interest are the estuary, the Oakland hills, and the bridge. Surrounding land uses are commercial and industrial. Utility wires and signs, especially billboards, all mar a potentially fine view from the road. As one crosses the bridge, the industrial activity detracts from the enjoyment of the vista.

Recommendations

1. The City should work with the Alameda County Public Works Agency Road Department in a cooperative effort to upgrade the appearance of the Park Street Bridge and abutment wall. These elements could provide a distinctive highlight to the Park Street gateway. Recommended improvements include painting the bridge a distinctive dark color (e.g. black, coffee brown) to give it added definition; and sandblasting or painting the wall to highlight its design details.



CROSSWALK

MORE TREES

REPLACE POLE SIGNS

2. The Blanding Street crosswalk should be textured with brick or bomanite to add definition to the gateway.

3. The Utility Undergrounding Committee of the Planning Board should give high priority to the undergrounding of the electricity and telephone wires that cross Park Street at Blanding and Clement Avenues.

4. In order to highlight and upgrade the entrance, an area large enough for some distinctive landscaping should be created (see Map 7). Measures such as the deletion of on-street parking spaces and the relocation of signs and street furniture should be employed.

5. Additional street trees should be planted along Park Street from the bridge to Clement Avenue.

6. The City should encourage a Park Street revitalization plan extending to Blanding Avenue.

7. The City should work with the property owners to replace the pole signs with ones more attractive and in scale with Park Street.

8. The existing street lights between Blanding and Clement Avenues should be replaced by ones that provide better illumination. However, a design for the light standards should be developed jointly by the Planning Department and the City Engineer so it may serve as a prototype for any Park Street revitalization plan.

9. The Planning staff should work with the City Engineer to consolidate and simplify the traffic signage at Park Street and Blanding Avenue in order to reduce the visual clutter.

APPENDIX A

VISUAL ANALYSIS OF ENTRANCES AND EXITS

Kunit and Calhoon
Landscape Architects

I. WEBSTER STREET-POSEY TUBES

A. MEDIAN STRIP REPLACEMENT

1. Setting

The median island between the Webster Street lanes is a low, narrow, concrete-gray continuous island from the Alameda Posey Tubes to the Atlantic Avenue intersection. It lacks visually distinguishing characteristics and ends at the intersection with two battered steel guard rails.

2. Impacts

Visual impacts of a replacement for the median will vary with material (brick, Bomanite) and design (color, height, width, steepness of sides, configuration of surface, texture or pattern).

A potential negative impact would be its inducement for pedestrians crossing Webster Street to ignore crosswalks and use the median as a stepping stone.

3. Mitigation Measures

The introduction of texture would enhance a rather colorless, textureless landscape surface. The paving treatment would have to contrast sufficiently in color and texture to be noticeable to automobile drivers. The median strip's use by pedestrians can be avoided by raising or shaping it as it approaches the Atlantic Avenue intersection or other crossing area. The island could become more wall-like at the intersection, both discouraging improper pedestrian crossing and acting as a guard rail.

B. STREET TREE PLANTINGS ON THE EAST SIDE OF WEBSTER STREET

1. Impacts

It is proposed to plant a row of small to medium-sized trees in front of the General Services Administration and Unified School District properties. Their function would be "to help define the street as a gateway, and to relate it to the qualities of Alameda as a whole."

The visual impact of a row of small to medium trees at this location can be evaluated only in terms of the total visual environment in which they are to exist. The roadside area is a barren, fenced, flat, poorly-maintained area. Trees of sufficient size and appropriate character could provide emphasis to the Gateway concept.

For drivers on Webster Street the trees would not block any desirable views outside of the immediate roadside corridor. Concern has been expressed about large trees close to a heavily-traveled roadway; however, in countless places throughout the state (usually those treasured most as scenic urban areas) large shade trees define and enhance roadway corridors. This is a safety problem only where the roadway is curved or large trees appear unexpectedly.

Negative impacts would be imposed by selection of unsuitable types of trees (out of character, non-hardy, high-maintenance, unsuitable rooting characteristics) and inappropriate placement.

2. Mitigation Measures

Well-placed, hardy, relatively maintenance-free trees would enhance the visual environment of the area. Correct placement and careful selection of tree type would avoid interference with utilities.

Tree installation procedures would have to be well conceived and executed to be successful visually and functionally. Trees should not be planted in boxes but in the ground, well staked. Proper maintenance is essential to the success of a tree-planting program.

C. LANDSCAPING THE COLLEGE OF ALAMEDA LANDFILL

1. Setting

The landfill next to the College on Webster Street appears as an unplanned, haphazard dump of fill material: a mixture of raw earth, cement and stone rubble, and miscellaneous discarded inorganic objects, presenting an unattractive view from the road.

2. Impacts

Any well-thought-out landscaping is anticipated to have only beneficial visual impacts.

3. Mitigation Measures

Since the impacts of landscaping would be beneficial, the following measures are in the nature of enhancement rather than mitigation. Perimeter landscaping of the fill area with dense planting could screen it from the roadway and allow the operation to continue. Landscaping of the entire landfill area would depend on the College's plans for its eventual use, and plans would have to be coordinated to insure that it not be a restrictive, costly, temporary measure.

D. DEVELOPMENT OF A BUS STOP/PLAZA

1. Setting

The area at the southwest corner of the Webster Street-Atlantic Avenue intersection is a patchwork of visual static. The billboards backing up an array of parked rental vehicles form a visually distracting, potentially dangerous backdrop. Pedestrians are hard to see against the bright colors, trade names, etc., of this diverse background, and overlapping signs and information increase the general visual confusion.

2. Impacts

This component of the Element involves purchasing the above land for a landscaped plaza and bus shelter (see Map 6, Scenic Highways Element). It offers a potential visual enhancement for both drivers and pedestrian users of the area. The proposal as sketched is assumed to be schematic and to suggest a possible design.

The visual pleasure and safety of those driving through the intersection would be greatly enhanced by eliminating visual distractions, clarifying use zones, and improving the organization of visual information.

The proposed bus shelter could shield its users from inclement weather and clarify the area's use for all other traffic in the intersection. The landscaping could provide shade, wind protection, consistent visual backdrops for signs and graphic symbols, and color and style.

3. Mitigation Measures

Because impacts of the proposed bus shelter and landscaped plaza are considered beneficial, this section deals with measures to enhance rather than mitigate them.

Attention should be paid in the design stage to the character, design, and location of the bus shelter so that it can best fulfill its functions. The shelter and any street furniture should be as vandal-proof as possible without sacrificing ease of use.

The landscaping should be designed for the best possible combination of the factors listed under Impacts. Such safety measures as adequate visibility by drivers of pedestrians using the plaza, visibility by pedestrians of vehicles, and unobstructed views required for vechicles' turning movements should be considered in design.

Coordination between public agencies is essential to the success of the shelter and plaza; choices of landscaping and paving materials, colors, and shelter design must satisfy the aesthetic and functional requirements of the intersection as a whole.

E. INSTALLATION OF A BUS SHELTER AT THE WEBSTER STREET-TYNAN AVENUE STOP

1. Setting

This area is visually barren and isolated. Access to the spot and potential users are uncertain.

2. Impacts

It is assumed that the proposed shelter will be attractive and functional. Without specific plans or elevations only general assumptions of impact can be made. The architectural significance of relating to existing tunnel structures could be a consideration in design.

F. INSTALLATION OF TRASH RECEPTACLES AT BUS SHELTERS

1. Setting

The trash receptacle at the existing bus shelter is a square, three-foot-high, molded plastic box with a nondescript gray

body and an orange hooded top. The general vicinity of the trash receptacle is littered.

2. Impacts

Simple duplication of existing receptacles would have some positive effect by increasing the opportunity for people to deposit trash. The present receptacles, however, seem temporary, are of questionable design quality, and are not a wholly attractive, functional solution to an unpleasant situation.

3. Mitigation Measures

Design of receptacles should be practical and attractive; they should have a permanent appearance and be integrated into a total intersection or plaza design. They should be as vandal-proof as possible and yet noticeable and conducive to use.

Proper placement of trash receptacles is crucial to their use. They must present maximum opportunity for easy deposit of litter. Simple observation of present litter patterns at the bus shelter should help with the eventual placement of trash receptacles.

G. LANDSCAPING OF SCHOOL DISTRICT AND GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION PROPERTY

1. Setting

The present view from the road is of an unused, littered, poorly-maintained expanse of flat ground. Weeds, chain-link fences, and temporary buildings typify this area.

2. Impacts

The objectives of the landscaping are visual screening and aesthetic enhancement of Webster Street. This is to be accomplished without hindering any future development of the property. A detailed scheme for this planting is not presented in the Element.

3. Mitigation Measures

Appropriate landscaping of this gateway would add greatly to the attractiveness of the area. Only through proper planning, design, and implementation procedures can the desired results be achieved.

H. SIMPLIFICATION OF SIGNS AT THE WEBSTER STREET-ATLANTIC AVENUE INTERSECTION

1. Setting

The placement of signs seems to have been a cumulative problem-solving process. Present overlapping information, lack of prior information, diverse placement of signs, obsolete signs, etc., add up to a visually confusing situation. The turning movements of traffic, pedestrian use, and the bus stop further complicate the intersection, although a large amount of traffic moves through it with apparent efficiency.

2. Impacts

There is no detailed new signing proposal in the Scenic Highways Element; thus impact analysis must be general in nature. The situation obviously could be improved through careful review of placement, character, and support systems of signs, and clarity of information displayed.

I. UNDERGROUNDING OF ELECTRIC WIRES AT BETHLEHEM AND SOUTHERN PACIFIC RAILROAD TRACKS.

The existing wires combined with the overhead traffic signals criss-cross the sky, creating visual disorder. Undergrounding these wires would simplify and clean up the overhead appearance of this area.

II. HIGH STREET BRIDGE

A. ELIMINATION OF FREE-STANDING SERVICE STATION SIGNS

1. Setting

There are two service stations, a Phillips 66 and a Chevron, at the intersection; both have poles supporting illuminated signs and lights. The signs are totally out of character with the rest of the area. The concept behind them seems to be one of maximum visibility without regard to community image.

2. Impacts

The impact question lies in whether these two businesses can be identified adequately without pole signs and whether the signs' removal would visually improve the area.

3. Mitigation Measures

In other locations where an area's visual character was diminished by pole signs, other alternatives have been found. An example is on Stanyan Street next to Golden Gate Park. Hardiness, general form and character, and maintenance requirements must be considered.

B. REMOVAL OF UTILITY POLES AND UNDERGROUNDING OF WIRES

The existing poles and wires are noted in the Scenic Highways Element as being "not as obtrusive as elsewhere." The surrounding environment is of high enough quality to absorb their visual impact.

A general upgrading of the area using a comprehensive design approach should not ignore beneficial impacts of removing the poles and wires. The more the area is upgraded, the more apparent will become the need for removal of poles and undergrounding of wires.

III. PARK STREET BRIDGE

A. UPGRADING PARK STREET BRIDGE AND ABUTMENT WALL

1. Setting

The bridge's silver-gray steelwork and dull gray concrete walls are an undistinguished color combination. The colors blend into the surrounding medium-valued hues of the surrounding pavement and buildings.

2. Impacts

The intricate pattern of the steel beams and the large mechanical apparatus for raising and lowering the bridge are a natural and unique opportunity for color highlighting. The suggested colors of the Scenic Highways Element, brown and black, have value in that from a distance looking down Park Street toward Oakland, they would sharpen the bridge's outline and give its intricate structure more clarity.

The proposed colors do have some disadvantages. One is their inability to adapt to a total design scheme involving other colors on other objects. Too much black or brown may appear somber or depressing, particularly on overcast or hazy days.

Sandblasting or painting the concrete wall would impart a fresher, cleaner appearance to the dull gray finish. The dual advantage of this dull gray is that it requires no maintenance and shows little dirt. Changing the color through painting would require either a choice of color that would not show dirt or the institution of more frequent maintenance. Sandblasting would give a fine clean initial effect; however, the dirt and grit generated by the traffic over the bridge could soon diminish this effect.

3. Mitigation Measures

A wider range of dark-valued colors could offset the potential somber effect of black or brown. Dark blue or green might be more appropriate to a city-wide or Park Street color scheme. Contrasting colors as highlights could add interest to certain details. Color or surface treatments of the concrete walls could be adapted to a difficult maintenance environment. Proper choice of color, or a varied treatment of different wall parts, could be applied, for example, a light top for lineal emphasis and dark sides to absorb dirt.

B. BLANDING AVENUE TEXTURED CROSSWALK

1. Setting

The present locations and directions of the crosswalks, which are defined by painted white lines, create problems. Traffic wishing to turn right over the bridge must pass through the walk area and stop in order to look back west on Park to see whether traffic is clear enough to make a turn. A similar problem exists on the north side of Park Street, where drivers wishing to turn have impaired vision of westbound traffic coming over the bridge. Most of the observed (November 5, 2 to 5 p.m.) pedestrian traffic is on the south side of Park Street crossing Blanding.

2. Impacts

The stated purpose of the Element is to add definition to the gateway. A sketch plan (Map 7, Scenic Highways Element) shows the proposed approximate location of the crosswalk. This plan has a limited concept of crosswalk function. There is no doubt that the proper texture and color treatment could improve visual conditions over the present asphalt and white lines.

3. Mitigation Measures

A broader concept of the pavement treatment should be incorporated into the design. A critical zone of driver decision exists for Blanding traffic as it reaches this intersection. This entire zone could be highlighted by different pavement, making it apparent to both Blanding and Park traffic. This would create safer and more attractive conditions. Wider crosswalk paving within this zone would make drivers aware that pedestrians are walking across the zone. The importance of wider, identified walkways is demonstrated on the south side of Park Street, where pedestrians now move straight across to the bridge pedestrian crossing rather than following the indirect narrow diagonal path of the white lines.

C. UNDERGROUNDING OF ELECTRICAL AND TELEPHONE WIRES

The general visual appeal of the area would be improved by this action.

D. CREATION OF A DISTINCTIVE LANDSCAPED AREA

1. Setting

The present landscaping consists of two struggling eucalyptus trees next to the bridge wall and a small feature planting in front of the Water's Edge: Immediate Care sign. This area is botanically rather lifeless and of minimal human comfort. It could be transformed into a reasonably attractive area.

2. Impacts

The Plan calls for removal of on-street parking spaces, relocation of signs, landscaping, and street furniture. Map 7 of the Scenic Highways Element indicates some potential planting locations.

The removal of seemingly little-used parking spaces on Park Street directly west of the intersection would add to the space available for improvements. A potential difficulty lies in the extension of the curb beyond a direct alignment with the bridge lanes. Undue constriction of traffic could result.

The relocation of signs (it is assumed, to more readily visible and comprehensible locations) and the use of landscapes such as trees for dark, consistent backdrops could make the signs more visible. Some existing signs are overlapping and silhouetted against white backgrounds, making them hard to see and respond to.

Landscaping could create problems unless placed out of or below important lines of sight for drivers.

3. Mitigation Measures

Correct placement and choice of planting materials is crucial to the success of landscape plantings. It is important that lines of sight be respected. Street furniture is of little value unless placed where it will be used. Perhaps advantage should be taken of the places where there is an opportunity to view the water, such as either side of the bridge where Park Street dead-ends at the water's edge. Consideration should be given to extending landscape treatment on either side of the bridge to the water's edge.

E. PLANTING STREET TREES ON PARK STREET BETWEEN THE BRIDGE AND CLEMENT AVENUE

1. Setting

There are some current attempts at street tree planting on this section of Park Street. Eight small (7-10 feet high), tight-canopied (4-5 feet wide) Ficas evergreen trees are planted about fifty feet apart. These are too small and too far apart to make a significant impact on the general visual setting of this block.

2. Impacts

Assuming that somewhat continuous, unified street planting is desired, it can have positive visual impacts for drivers, pedestrians, and businesses.

3. Mitigation Measures

Because street tree planting would have positive effects, the following measures are those of enhancement rather than of mitigation.

Existing conditions must be considered carefully in the design stage. Most of the buildings on the south-facing side of Park Street do not offer or require views that would be blocked by foliage. Views of the buildings themselves do not seem important here; rather it is their identifying signs that need to be seen. On the north-facing side, outdoor auto displays must be considered.

A beneficial visual effect can be created on this block provided the functional business requirements of the buildings are met. Entrance and egress needs must be considered in choosing trees for their installed and potential height, breadth, density, and canopy form. Tree masses could be selected that would be either above or below important views. Placement of trees shoud conform to individual needs of buildings on the block without sacrificing the overall effect.

F. ENCOURAGEMENT OF PARK STREET REVITALIZATION EXTENDING TO BLANDING AVENUE

This proposal lacks the specifics necessary for adequate comment on its impacts.

G. REPLACEMENT OF POLE SIGNS

1. Setting

There are three major pole signs in the direct vicinity of the bridge: Ford Truck, Lee Adams VW, and the Red Sails Restaurant Parking. Numerous poles are visible looking west on Park Street from the bridge area.

2. Impacts

The Element suggests that the City work with property owners to replace the pole signs with more attractive signs in scale with Park Street.

3. Mitigation Measures

Where signs may be placed directly on buildings (Ford Truck) or right next to buildings (Lee Adams VW), the effect on the general visual clarity of the intersection is positive. Loss of identification of businesses need not be significant. Signs relating to businesses away from the immediate area (Red Sails points to an area 100 feet from the bridge) require careful individual scrutiny and policy decisions as to their removal or replacement potential.

H. REPLACEMENT OF STREET LIGHTS WITH PARK STREET PROTOTYPE

1. Setting

Many different types of light standards now exist in the gateway area. The bridge lights are of a flat-topped wall-mounted design. The first block off the bridge to Clement Street is to have the older city standard. From Clement Street west on Park are the newer larger standards. Car display and parking lot standards, illuminated signs, and other light sources further complicate the lighting scene.

The older standards are medium-green poles with nice detail and flared and fluted bases. The light fixture itself is a single hanging luminaire. The newer lights are brushed aluminum inward-curving poles with large, slanted, elongated rectangular fixtures. The bridge lights sit on the abutment wall; their design is undistinguished.

The illumination effect of these lights was viewed from 5 to 5:30 p.m. November 5, 1975, under an overcast sky. The private individual sign lights go on first, giving off a jumble of overlapping displays of varied information and symbols. The bridge lights come on next and emit a weak, cold blue-green light. The City standards light last. The older lights appear much smaller and have a warmer glow than the newer lights. The fixtures on the newer poles are large, bright, blue-white, and glaring in appearance. When viewed from a distance, the effective brightness usable to those walking or driving does not seem significantly different from that of the older lights.

2. Impacts and Mitigation Measures

All of the present lighting scenes along Park Street lack character and effective light. Added effective lighting is needed for pedestrian safety and encouragement to use the area at night. New lighting standards should have proper illumination levels and appropriate character.

Desired design motives should be more clearly articulated. A wide variety of fixtures is available and many combinations of light intensity and character are possible. A detailed statement of lighting criteria should be formulated before individual fixtures are chosen.

I. SIMPLIFICATION OF TRAFFIC SIGNAGE AT PARK STREET AND BLANDING AVENUE

The aim of the proposal is to reduce visual clutter. There are now no left-turn signs, street signs, railroad crossing signs, or truck route signs. Since no specific recommendation is made, potential impacts cannot be analyzed.

IV. MILLER-SWEENEY BRIDGE (FRUITVALE)

A. MEDIAN STRIP REPAVING; SCREENING THE CHAIN-LINK FENCE WITH ADDITIONAL PLANTING

1. Setting

The general impression of the area after one crosses the bridge from Oakland is of an undistinguished industrial-commercial landscape. The tall towers of the railroad bridge give the area an immediate identity from a distance. There has been a general lack of attention to details in the design of the median and the fencing.

2. Impacts and Mitigation Measures

In general, the points addressed on page A-1 for Webster Street apply to this median strip also.

Screening the chain-link fence seems appropriate, since it has no visual value. Ivy is used as a rule; perhaps other, more imaginative solutions should be sought. Other pressing visual concerns are the storage tanks immediately adjacent to the roadway. Taller trees, more closely spaced, would screen views of the tanks and create a more pleasing gateway to the city.

B. ADDITIONAL LANDSCAPING FOR FERNSIDE SHOPPING CENTER

1. Setting

Existing attempts at landscaping include scattered small trees and random, widely-spaced low shrubs on small islands in a wide expanse of asphalt.

2. Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Without specific recommendations, it is difficult to assess the total effect of additional landscaping. It is obvious that any well-chosen plant material would help. An area of this size and visibility would require large-scale, well-placed trees to improve the visual environment significantly.

Specific factors to consider in design might include balancing the landscape on both sides of Tilden Way in planting material density, character, and size, and careful attention to color, year-round variation, increased human comfort, and maintenance qualities of proposed landscape schemes.

C. UNDERGROUNDING OF UTILITY WIRES CROSSING TILDEN WAY.

The general visual quality of the gateway corridor would be improved by this action.

V. ALAMEDA/OAKLAND CITY LIMIT (DOOLITTLE DRIVE)

The Element contains the following recommendations:

- Improvement of litter collection.
- Continued fine maintenance of the golf course.
- Undergrounding of utility wires.
- Encouragement of proceeding with East Bay Regional Park District plans for dump

The first three recommendations require little impact analysis since they do not impose significant changes on the visual conditions. Undergrounding utilities is generally viewed as beneficial. It is also assumed that a park would be more visually desirable than the present City dump. The most scenically remarkable aspect of the area is the bird life in the low, marshy areas visible from the roadway. Intense effort should be exerted to protect and enhance this valuable resource.

VI. BAY FARM ISLAND BRIDGE

A. UNDERGROUNDING OF UTILITY LINES

The removal of poles that now fracture the skyline of the area should improve its general character. Attention should also be given to the large gray transformer box in the vicinity. It is now surrounded by a chain-link fence; a more attractive screen would alleviate a major visual blot.

B. LANDSCAPING OF CONSTRUCTION AREAS, ESPECIALLY BERMS

The land plane surface on the westerly side of the roadway is primarily raw, rocky earth with scattered scraggly weeds. Landscaping is a real need for this area. It contrasts sharply with the other side of the roadway, where thriving pines and pyracantha combine with other shrubs and trees to form a pleasing backdrop. The vibrant orange berries seen in November and December, cascading in front of the dark green pines, are a welcome introduction to Alameda.

The area on the westerly side has enough space to make significant landscape statements as a gateway to the city. It is readily viewed from the road and has the added interest of the water's edge and the sloping surfaces of the roadway berm. Natural surface textures of grass ground covers and low shrubs should be played against interesting groupings of a variety of trees.

With proper planning, a potential negative impact can be avoided. Driver and pedestrian visibility must not be impaired at critical decision points. Lines of sight must be maintained for adequate reaction time and must not be intruded upon by dense landscaping too close to the roadway.

C. FUTURE BICYCLE STAGING AREA LANDSCAPED ATTRACTIVELY

Several conditions make this location ideal for bicycle staging. Biking activity was observed in the area, with a random mix of riders from casual use by the very young to older, more dedicated bicyclists. There is already a bike path leading to the area across from the other side of the bridge on Bay Farm Island and a scenic access walkway to the edge of the water. The open area has enough room to accommodate associated activities.

A landscape design plan must include possible outdoor furniture, paving treatments, lighting, and planting. Increased use of the area will require careful consideration of potential litter problems, police supervision needs, signing, and safety measures attendant to increased bicycle use.

D. PREPARATION OF A DESIGN SCHEME FOR OTIS DRIVE-BEACH STREET TRAFFIC ISLANDS

The islands are now paved over with concrete and have no aesthetic value. Design schemes incorporating textured paving, lawn, shrubs, or rocks could add a sense of quality and uniqueness to the entrance area. Ideally the design scheme would include hardy, low-maintenance plants with seasonal interest and colorful, deeply-textured or patterned paving treatments.

PORT OF OAKLAND

DONALD C. FLYNN
Director of Airport Planning

January 12, 1975

Mr. Donald Patterson
Planning Director
City of Alameda
City Hall
Alameda, California

Dear Mr. Patterson:

We have reviewed the Final Draft of the Scenic Highways Element and its Draft EIR transmitted to us on December 5, 1975.

In general, Alameda's Scenic Highways Element is not in conflict with Port policies. We note, however, that the bulk of Bay Farm Island is not included in either the Scenic Driving Tour or the Bicycle Route proposals.

As you know, Bay Farm Island offers spectacular views of San Francisco Bay. Its future streets and bikeways may therefore be worthwhile additions to the Scenic Driving Tour and Bicycle Route. On page 45 of the Draft Element it is noted that the completion of Island Drive will justify future consideration of Bay Farm Island for inclusion in the Scenic Highways Element.

We are concerned that this may be an instance in which Alameda's planning for Bay Farm Island is primarily deference to developers' plans for Bay Farm Island. It is possible that reasonable plans may result under Alameda's required General Plan Elements of Land Use, Circulation and Open Space (these are the three required General Plan Elements most directly related to the Scenic Highways Element; see the General Plan Guidelines of September 1973, at pg. IV-34); but it is the City of Alameda, and not developers, that must make basic decisions in the City's General Plan. The City should determine, as a part of its planning process, whether its Bicycle Route and Scenic Driving Tour should include Bay Farm Island, and should determine the location and character of streets and bikeways accordingly.

We recognize the difficulties involved in the preparation of all of the required General Plan elements in a single planning process. However, to make basic decisions about the scenic routes, or about suitability of land for housing or other uses, before completion of draft Circulation, Land Use and Open Space Elements, does not appear to be a proper planning approach because it tends to make important land use commitments without full consideration of other important General Plan Elements. Thus, the Port urges that you make clear in the Final Draft itself that the Scenic Highways Element has been prepared as part of a program to rewrite the entire General Plan, that it does not recommend, nor should it be read to imply, any particular use of any land, and that it is fully subject to modification in light of the Circulation, Land Use and Open Space Elements to be prepared.

Sincerely,

Donald C. Flynn

jdd

PROPOSED ADDITIONS TO SCENIC HIGHWAYS ELEMENT

1. New Foreword

Incorporate at the beginning of the Element, preceding page 1:

There are two necessarily integrated ways to improve the visual quality of the streets and thoroughfares where needed in all parts of the City:

-- positive improvements to the visual character of a street or thoroughfare such as: significant landscaping; good maintenance of structures; enhancement of the setting of buildings; well designed structures; harmonious color and form relationship, etc.

-- removal of significant negative factors, such as: obstructions to views; obtrusive, inharmonious structures of any kind including billboards and overly competitive signs; blatant conflicts among forms and colors, etc.

Both of these approaches are used in the Scenic Highways Element. It is further stressed that the positive measures proposed in the Scenic Highways Element to improve the visual quality of the thoroughfares and streets of Alameda, some at significant public and private cost, are virtually meaningless unless accompanied by a vigorous campaign to remove significant negative factors at the same time, and thus it is the policy of the City to adopt measures to remove such significant negative factors in Alameda's visual environment in the near future.

2. Additional Paragraph in the Introduction

Include as a new third paragraph at the bottom of page 1:

Therefore it is appropriate to state a definition for scenic highways in which every thoroughfare, street, and path in Alameda is to be considered scenic in a particular appropriate category: ranging from quiet residential streets to busy but attractive commercial thoroughfares.

3. New Paragraph in Future Additions Section

Incorporate as a new number 6 on page 45:

This Element should be used as one basis for an Urban Design Element. The following statement of principles shows how the Scenic Highways Element fits into the future Urban Design Element.

- Many references affirm that the visual impact of a city has a deep psychological effect on the people who live in it, work in it and visit it.

- The visual quality or image of a city is derived through the integration by an individual of a continuum of visual experiences. The experiences making up the continuum can be: positive, enjoyable, soothing, and stimulating; or negative, chaotic and monotonous; or some combination of both positive and negative visual experiences.

- No part of the city can be exempted from the visual experience of the people in the city and thus the purpose of an urban design element must be a program to enhance ultimately the visual quality of all parts of the city.

2/13/76

F O R E W O R D

There are two necessarily integrated ways to improve the visual quality of the streets and thoroughfares where needed in all parts of the City:

-- positive improvements to the visual character of a street or thoroughfare such as: significant landscaping; good maintenance of structures; enhancement of the setting of buildings; well designed structures; harmonious color and form relationship, etc.

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WILLIAMS & MOCINE : CITY AND REGIONAL PLANNING
1045 Sansome Street, San Francisco, California 94111

SYDNEY H. WILLIAMS : FEBRUARY 1976

CITY OF ALAMEDA SCENIC HIGHWAYS ELEMENT

Statement of Principles Linking Scenic Highways Element to Forthcoming Urban Design Element

The purpose of the Scenic Highways Element is to promote and protect the visual quality of Alameda and to project a positive image of the City to visitors and residents.* The following statement of principles shows how the Scenic Highways Element fits into the Urban Design Element to be prepared by the City of Alameda in the near future.

- Many references affirm that the visual impact of a city has a deep psychological effect on the people who live in it, work in it and visit it.

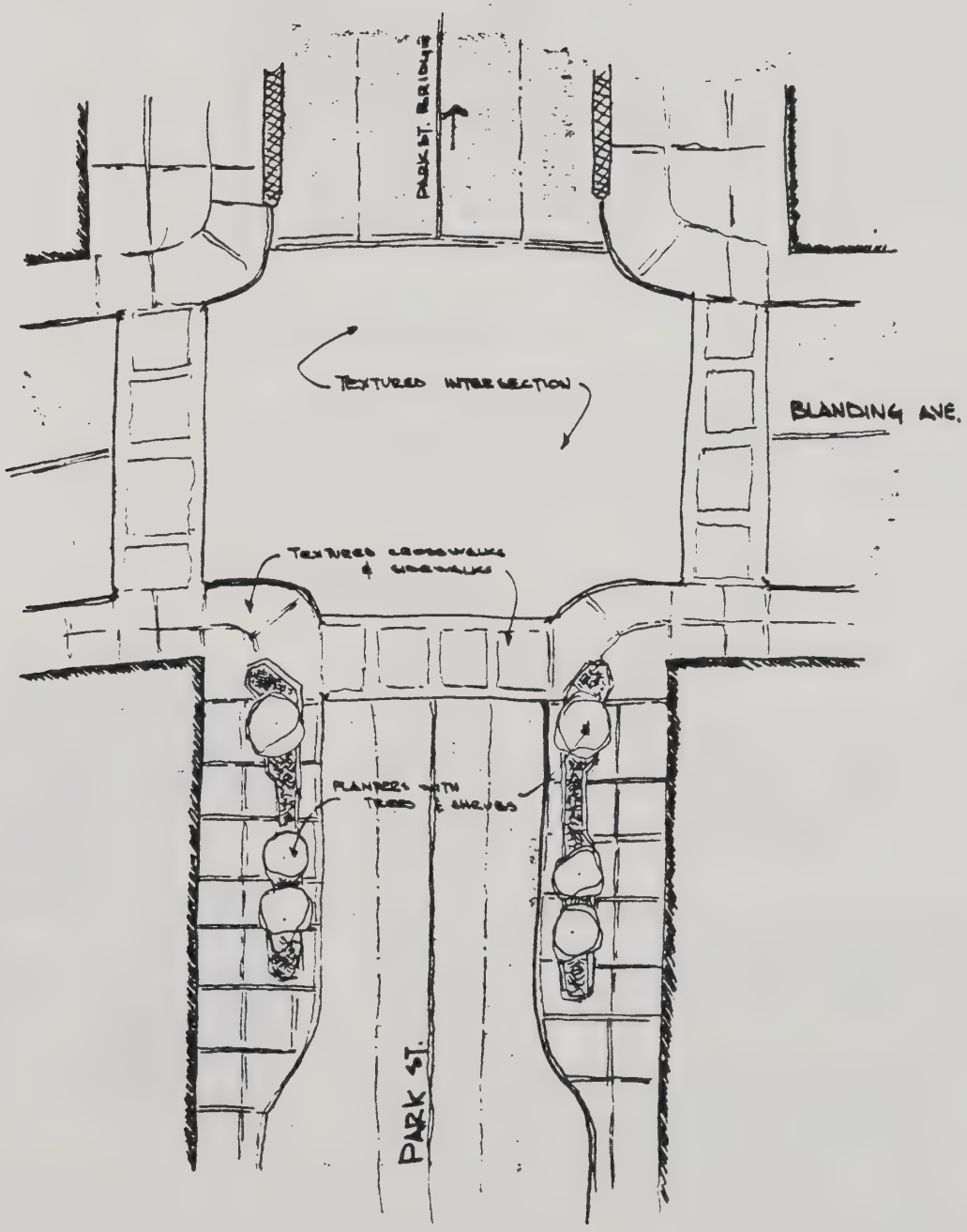
- The visual quality or image of a city is derived through the integration by an individual of a continuum of visual experiences. The experiences making up the continuum can be: positive, enjoyable, soothing, and stimulating; or negative, chaotic and monotonous; or some combination of both positive and negative visual experiences.

- No part of the city can be exempted from the visual experience of the people in the city and thus the purpose of an urban design element must be a program to enhance ultimately the visual quality of all parts of the city.

- Therefore it is appropriate to state a definition for scenic highways

*EIR Scenic Highways Element 11/75.

MAP 7. PARK STREET GATEWAY - SKETCH PLAN



3. HIGH STREET BRIDGE

Entering Alameda

The condition of the gateway corridor is very good and needs very little enhancement. High Street provides the only entrance into the City that imparts a truly positive image of Alameda. The estuary, San Leandro Bay and the bridge all provide an enjoyable viewing experience as one enters into Alameda. The area's land uses are of residential, commercial and industrial nature. Utility wires are present but are not as obtrusive as elsewhere. The commercial signs detract somewhat from the residential quality of the entrance. The residential neighborhood and tree-lined High Street are excellent in appearance and inviting to the traveler.

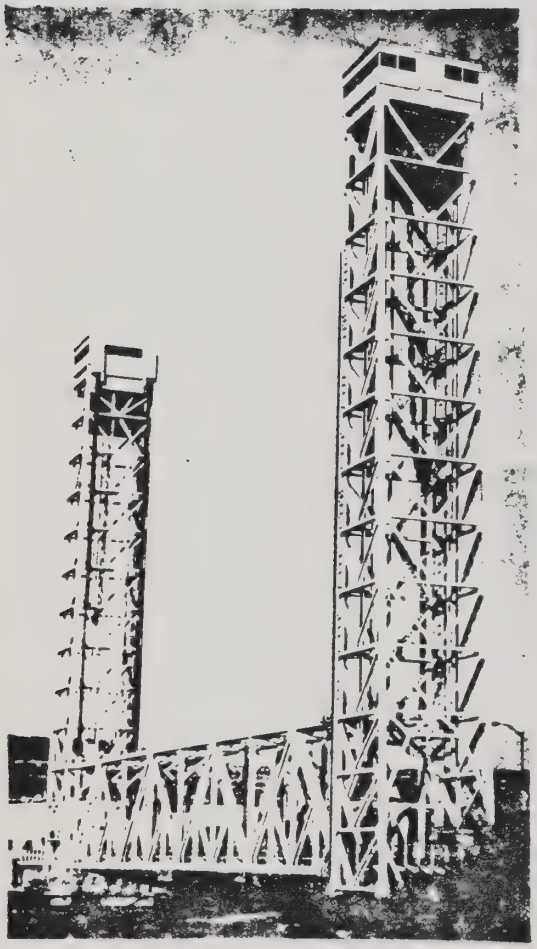
Leaving Alameda

The corridor rates from good to excellent. The estuary, bridge and hills form an aesthetically pleasing relief. With High Street's trees framing the Oakland hills, an excellent panorama is produced.

Recommendations

1. Freestanding gas station signs should be eliminated.
2. A design theme for the adjacent shopping area signs which would be more compatible with the residential character of the area should be established.
3. More street trees should be planted along both the east and the west sides of Fernside Boulevard to reinforce the image of High Street and Gibbons Drive.
4. Priority should be given to removal of the heavy utility poles on the east side of High Street and undergrounding of the wires.

4. MILLER-SWEENEY BRIDGE (FRUITVALE)



Entering Alameda

The condition of the corridor is generally good, although some sections are of lower quality. The estuary and bridge are two elements of visual interest to the traveler. Adjacent land uses are residential, commercial and industrial. Utility lines and signs distract from the general view. The immediate image perceived upon entering Alameda is that of a residential community with a water orientation; this image is enhanced by the moored sailboats. The industrial area negatively affects this image and the gasoline storage area (tanks, cans and signs) is not aesthetically appealing. The Fernside Shopping Center is bleak in appearance and could be improved. The view of the Park Street and High Street bridges, flanking this one, adds an interesting dimension which accents the island character of Alameda.

Leaving Alameda

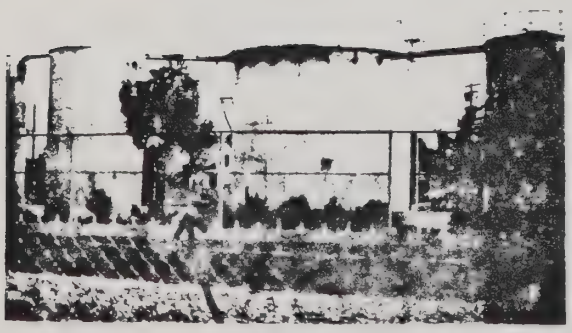
The rating of the corridor is generally good with some areas of fair quality. The estuary and the hills in conjunction with the Oakland skyline and the bridges provide interesting and visually contrasting points. The corridor embodies residential, commercial and industrial uses. The residential area imparts a positive image of the City while the planting around the gasoline storage area provides an attractive buffer.

Recommendations

1. Tilden Way should be improved by paving the median strip with an attractive material, and by screening the chain link fence with additional planting.

2. Landscaping should be added within the Fernside Shopping Center as well as along its perimeter to alleviate its barren appearance.

3. Utility wires crossing Tilden Way should be given priority for undergrounding.



5. ALAMEDA/OAKLAND CITY LIMIT (DOOLITTLE DRIVE)

Entering Alameda

The gateway corridor is in fair to good condition but could easily be upgraded to an excellent rating. The surrounding land use is primarily open space, with the Alameda Municipal Golf Course to the southwest and the City Dump and Model Airplane Field to the northeast. Utility wires are evident and negatively impact the distant view. Litter is noticeable along both sides of Doolittle Drive.

Leaving Alameda

The corridor is comprised of interesting contrasts but is impacted by such things as litter, lack of landscaping, and billboards. Therefore, what could be of excellent condition is presently fair to good. Interesting elements include the golf course, Oakland and the hills, San Leandro Bay, and the Oakland/Alameda County Coliseum.

Recommendations

1. The litter collection should be improved at the Model Airplane Field, the City Dump, and along Doolittle Drive.

2. The fine maintenance of the golf course should be continued.

3. Utility wires that cross Doolittle Drive should be given priority for undergrounding.

4. The City should encourage the East Bay Regional Park District to proceed with their park plan for the City Dump as soon as that facility is closed.

6. BAY FARM ISLAND BRIDGE

The bridge is not actually a City gateway, but an internal connection between Bay Farm Island and the Island of Alameda.

Entering the Island

A rating of good to excellent best characterizes this corridor. The view of San Mateo County and San Francisco across the bay, the estuary, and the Oakland hills is visually stimulating and paints a very favorable picture of Alameda. The adjacent residential and park area embellish the residential, island environment of Alameda. There are utility lines across Otis Drive that are obtrusive. There are several asphalt traffic islands at the Otis Drive/Peach Street intersection which could easily be beautified through a combination of planting and attractive paving.

Leaving the Island

The view from the road is aesthetically pleasing and is comprised of the bay, estuary and golf course. The residential and open space areas are generally well landscaped. Utility wires and construction activity are evident, as is the need to enhance the northwest side of the land around the bridge.

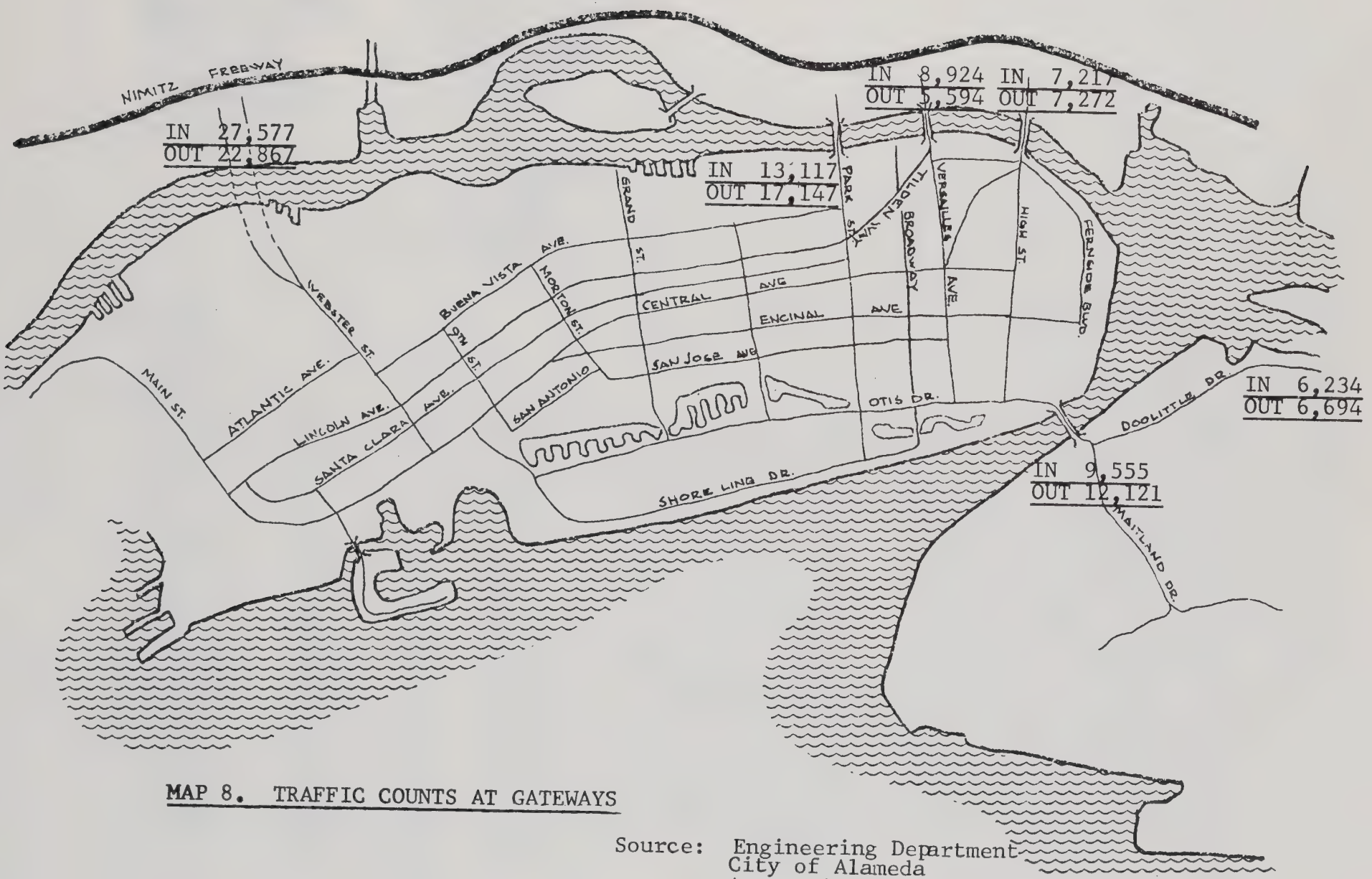
Recommendations

1. Utility lines that cross Otis Drive at Peach and Post Streets should be given priority for undergrounding.

2. The construction areas, especially the berms, should be well landscaped.

3. The future bike staging area adjacent to the bridge should be landscaped and developed in an attractive manner.

4. A design scheme should be prepared to improve the Otis Drive/Peach Street traffic islands.



MAP 8. TRAFFIC COUNTS AT GATEWAYS

Source: Engineering Department
City of Alameda
August 1975

Bicycle Routes

Bicycle routes are specifically mentioned in the State guidelines as an accepted part of a Scenic Highways Element. In Alameda the bicycle is used by people in almost every age group. The generally flat topography of the City permits easy biking throughout the community, providing a viable mode of transit. The City now has an officially adopted Bike Route Plan that is in the process of being implemented. Its history is summarized below:

1. September 20, 1973 - The Recreation Commission recommended creation of an Action Task Force to develop a workable bicycle transportation system.

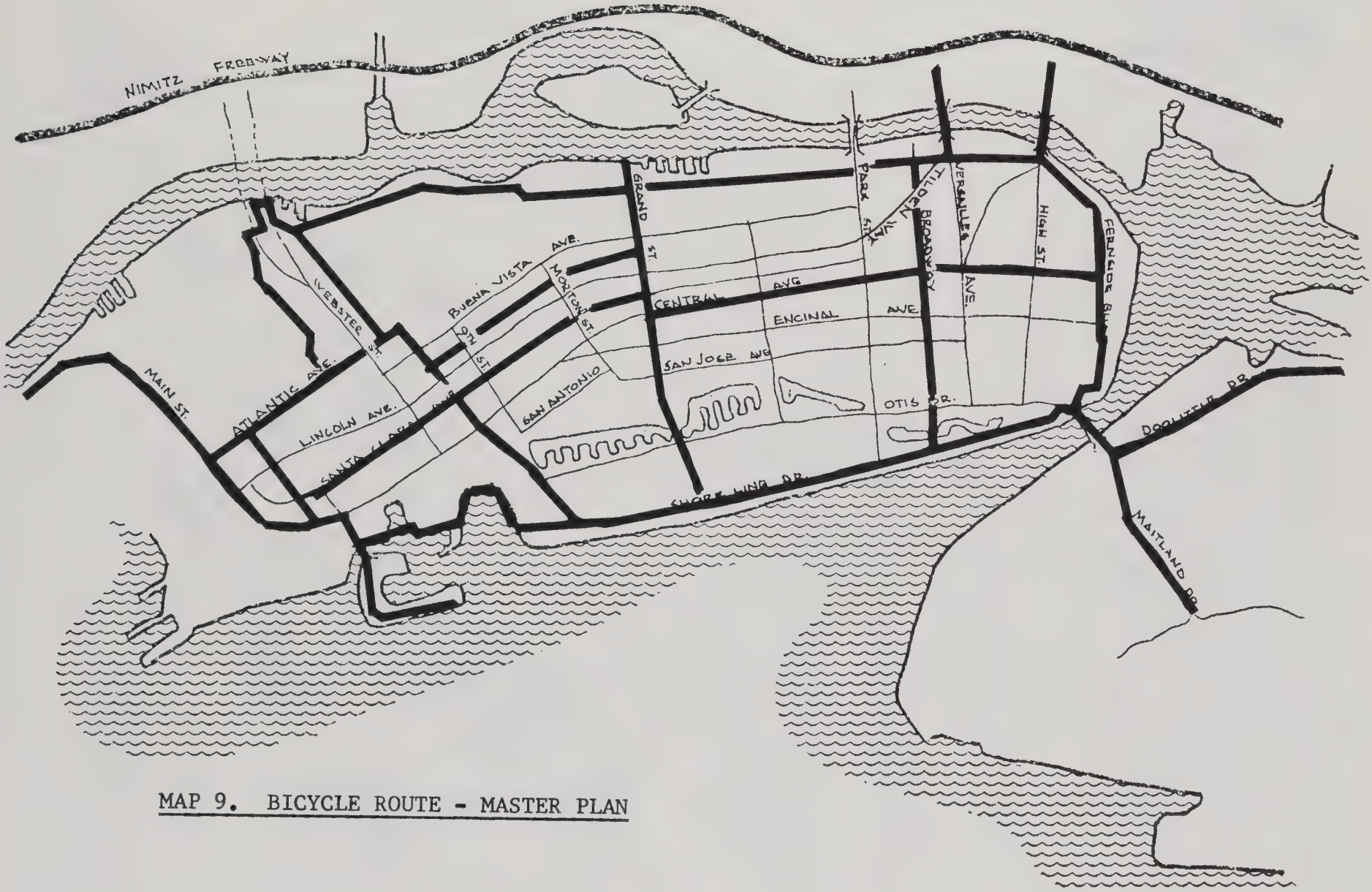
2. October 2, 1973 - The City Council authorized the formation of a Bicycle Task Force charged with developing a viable bike path plan. Membership was not to exceed nine persons and was to be comprised of representatives of the City Departments of Recreation, Engineering, Planning and Police, as well as one student, a senior citizen, a representative of the bicycle industry and two at-large members.

3. June 27, 1974 - The Bicycle Task Force approved the Bikeways Master Plan and submitted it for review to the Recreation Commission and the City Council.

4. August 1, 1974 - The Recreation Commission approved the Bikeways Master Plan.

5. October 1, 1974 - The City Council adopted the Bikeways Master Plan as the City's official bikepath program.

The final bike route report, entitled Bikeway Proposal, City of Alameda, August 1, 1974, explains in detail the location and the composition of the bike route. The proposed route is comprised of several different



MAP 9. BICYCLE ROUTE - MASTER PLAN

types of bikeways: on-street (signed, striped and marked); on-street (signed only); off-pavement or on-sidewalk (signed); future off-pavement or on-sidewalk (signed); future on-street (signed, striped and marked); and alternate route (signed only); as well as differing widths. A detailed account of each segment is contained on pages 17 through 23(a) of the report which is available from the Department of Parks and Recreation.

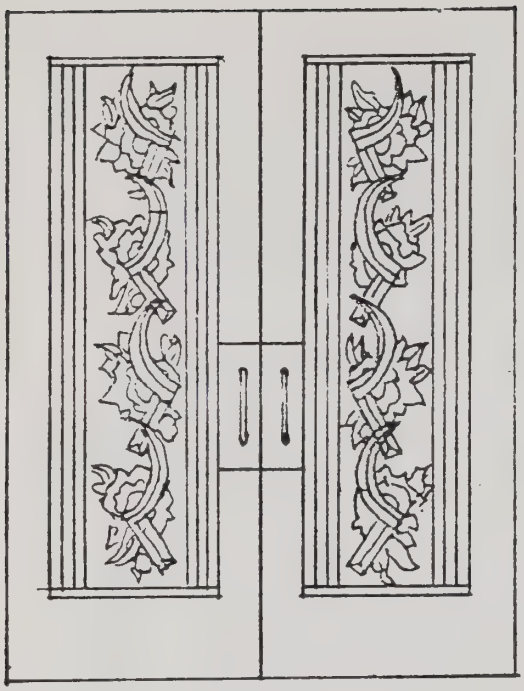
Recommendations

1. The officially adopted Bike Route should be included in the Scenic Highways Element.

2. The City should give priority to initiation and rapid completion of the bike path system.

3. Once the system is complete, a map of the route, including identification and description of interesting structures and vistas, should be printed for general distribution or sale.

VIEW OF CLINTON AV./WALNUT
10.16.75



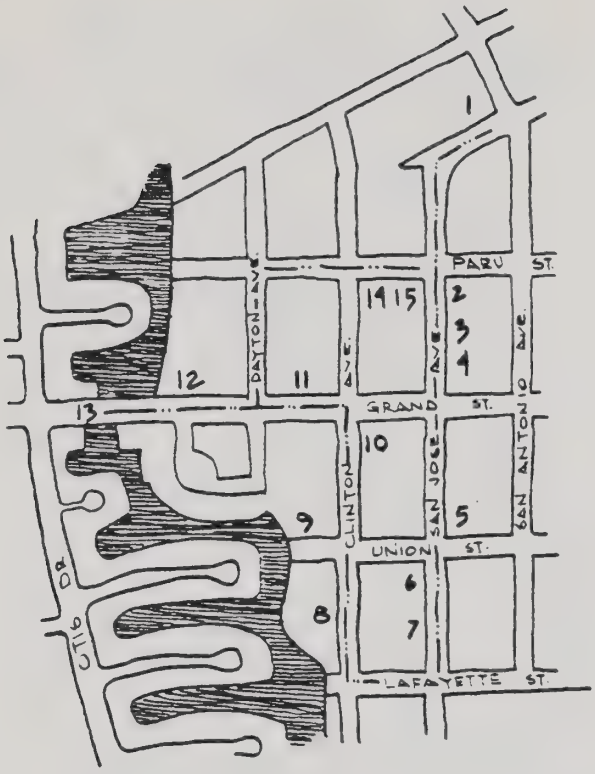
Victorian Walking Tours

Alameda's heritage of Victorian Architecture is widely recognized as one of the most outstanding in the State. These buildings are a major factor in the City's imageability, and a feature frequently admired and commented on by visitors. They include not just stately homes designed for wealthy persons, but Victorian cottages originally intended - and still providing - distinctive housing for families with average incomes. The quality and variety of Victorian housing is a tremendous scenic resource which should be developed by the City.

The following Victorian tours are derived from a brochure prepared by an architectural student at the University of California.* For inclusion in the Scenic Highways Element, the three original tours have been modified in order to shorten the time and the area covered by the tours, thus making them less fatiguing. The proposed tours are shown on maps following the text.

* Rynerson, Stephen M., Victorian Alameda, A Walking Tour, undated publication.

1. 1000 block of Morton Street, especially 1007 and 1001.
2. 1000 Paru Street
3. 1615 San Jose Avenue
4. 1001 Grand Street
5. 1021 Union Street
6. 1834 San Jose Avenue
7. 929 Lafayette Street
8. 1800 block of Clinton, especially 1817, 1821, 1828 & 1832
9. 800 block of Union especially 893
10. 900 Grand Street
11. 815 Grand Street
12. 701 Grand Street
13. Midpoint of bridge & view of lagoon in both directions
14. 1605 Clinton Avenue
15. 912 Paru Street



MAP 10.
VICTORIAN TOUR
GOLD COAST, SOUTH

RAILING DETAIL

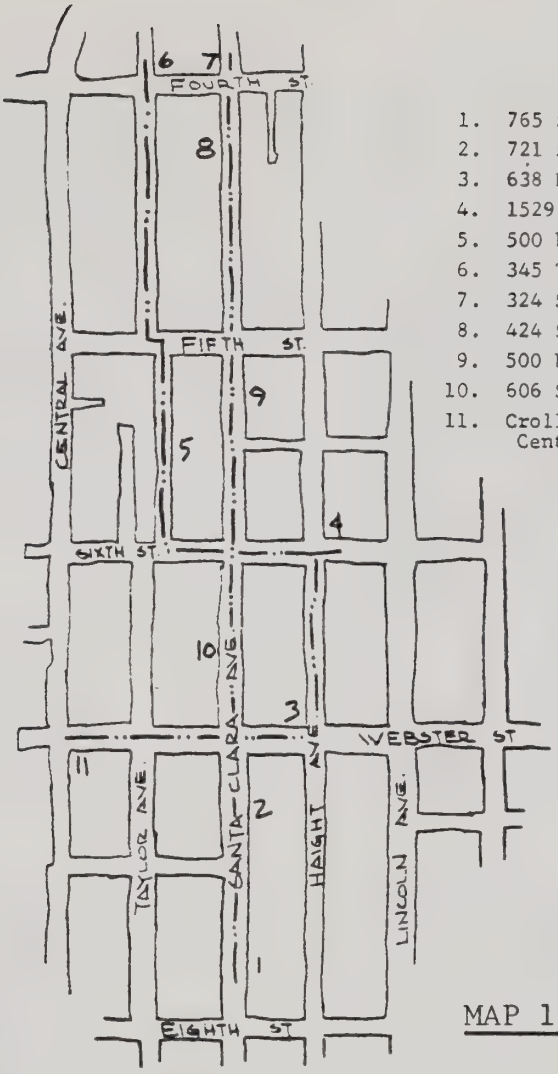
Gold Coast Tours

The Gold Coast of Alameda is a well known neighborhood containing many notable examples of Victorian architecture enhanced by a gracious residential environment. The area imparts a sense of history and tradition, and a positive image of Alameda as a desirable residential community. These two tours were originally proposed as a single one-and-a-half hour walking tour. However, the length of that tour, both in time and in distance, is too extensive and would result in physical discomfort for many pedestrians. The tour has been divided into two more manageable ones, both including Franklin Park. With its tree-shaded benches, grassy areas and public facilities, the park offers a fine resting place where users of all ages can enjoy the surrounding environment.

MAP 11. VICTORIAN TOUR
GOLD COAST, NORTH

1. 1602 San Antonio Avenue
2. 1717 San Antonio Avenue
3. 1812-1834 San Antonio Avenue
4. 1420 Lafayette Street
5. 1419 Union Street
6. 1630 Central Avenue
7. 1524 Alameda Avenue
8. 1423 Central Avenue
9. 1400 block of Santa Clara, especially 1402, 1406 and 1410
10. 1100 block of Morton, especially 1120
11. 1441 Grand Street (Art gallery open to the public)

FRONT GARDENS



1. 765 Santa Clara Avenue
2. 721 Santa Clara Avenue
3. 638 Haight Street
4. 1529 Sixth Street
5. 500 block of Taylor Avenue
6. 345 Taylor Avenue
7. 324 Santa Clara Avenue
8. 424 Santa Clara Avenue
9. 500 block of Santa Clara Avenue
10. 606 Santa Clara Avenue
11. Croll's Bar, Webster Street at Central Avenue

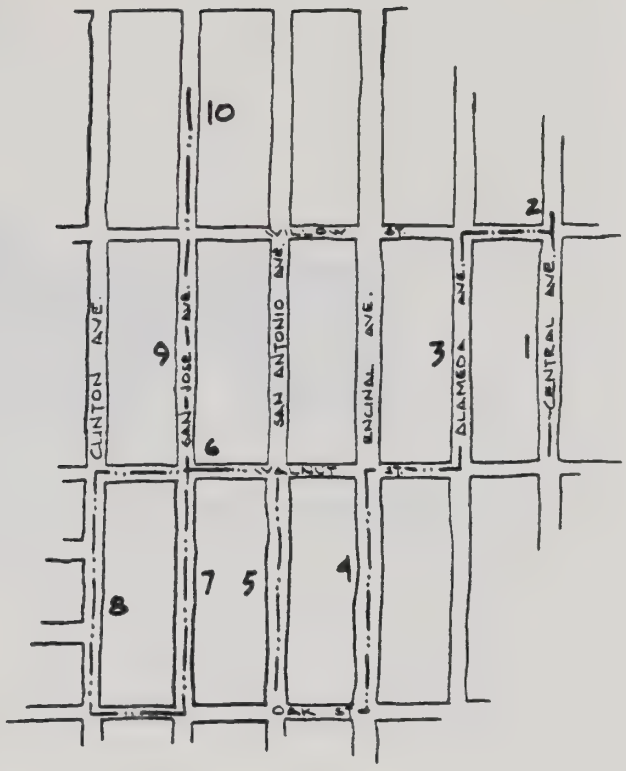
MAP 12. VICTORIAN TOUR
WEST END

RESIDENTIAL STREET

West End Tour

This tour features eleven interesting structures, located west of Eighth Street. It was originally intended as a driving tour. However, the difficulty of driving the tour while simultaneiously trying to locate a specific address and observe architectural details is a difficult task, resulting in a diminished appreciation of the cited buildings. A pedestrian pace enables one to easily observe the details that characterize Victorian architecture, as well as the building setting. The proposed tour is easily walkable in a half hour's time. By terminating at Croll's Bar, it provides added incentive to stop inside and view the owner's collection of memorabilia associated with the one-time resort and sports training complex.

1. 2100 block of Central, especially 2165, 2153/2155, 2145, 2149 & 2105
2. 2066 Central Avenue
3. 2100 block of Alameda, especially 2106, 2128 and 2160
4. 2200 Block of Encinal, especially 2216
5. 2200 block of San Antonio, especially 2258, 2253 and 2225
6. 2169 San Jose Avenue
7. 2200 block of San Jose, especially 2206, 2212, 2214, 2218 & 2250
8. 2200 block of Clinton, especially 2204 and 2212
9. 2100 block of San Jose, especially 2103, 2122 and 2169
10. 2000 block of San Jose until 2037, note also 2070



MAP 13. VICTORIAN TOUR
CENTRAL ALAMEDA

Central Alameda Tour

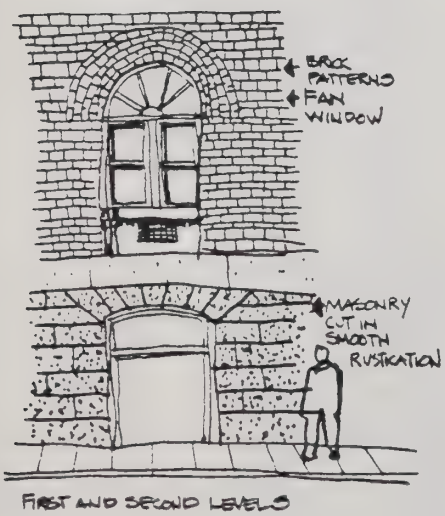
The central area of Alameda contains many of the City's finest Victorian structures, although the quality of the surrounding environment varies considerably. Initially this section was proposed for a combined walking and driving tour. The entire route proved to be too lengthy and included several blocks which were lacking in visual quality. The revised tour eliminates several of the least interesting sections and makes possible a pleasant walking pace.

city hall
oak st. elevation

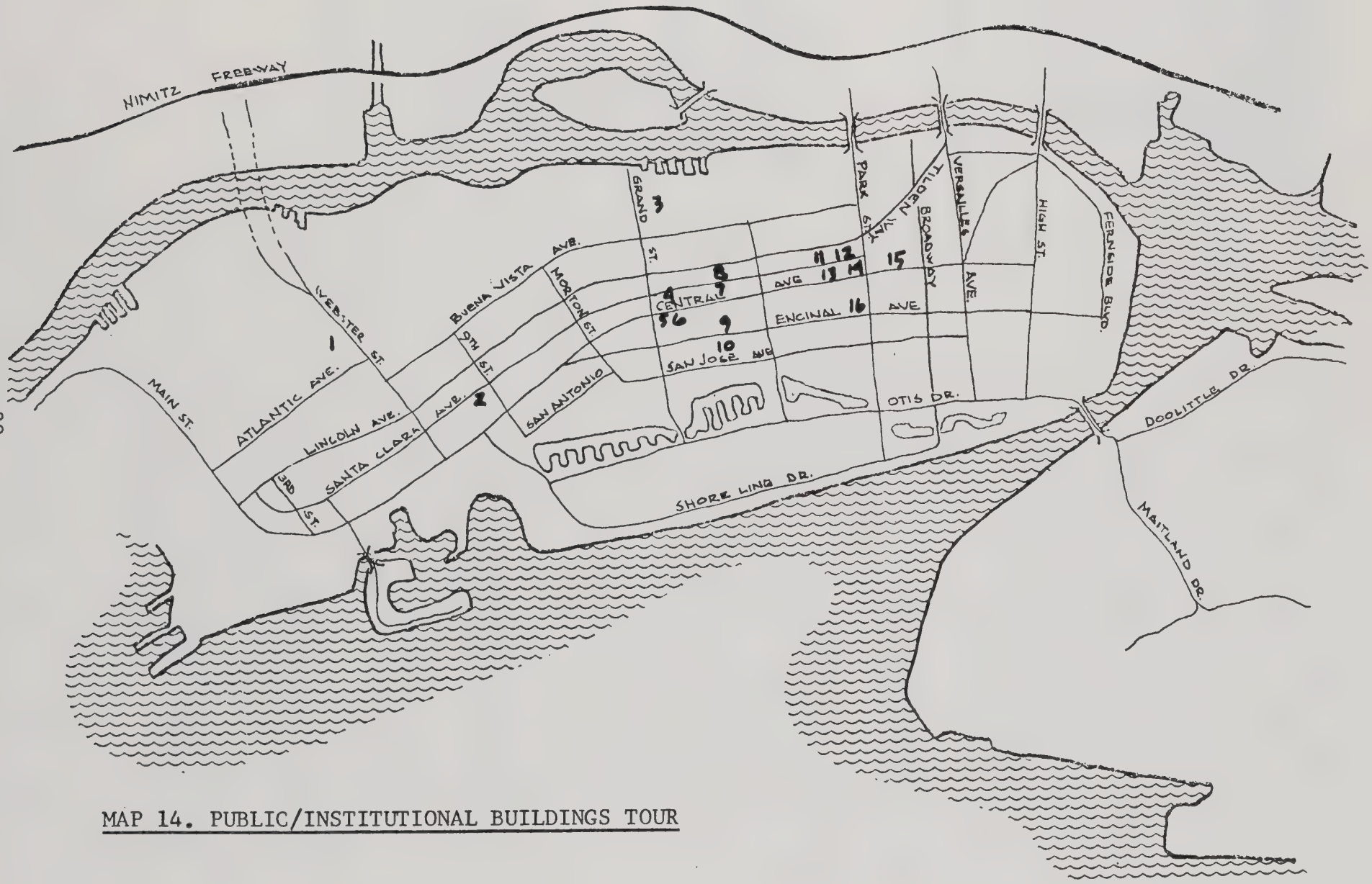
Tour of Civic Buildings

Among the City's principal scenic resources are its public and institutional buildings - some of which have been recognized in regional publications as outstanding examples of design. Spanning construction periods from the Victorian era through the present, they reflect both the social and architectural history of the community. These buildings convey an admirable image of Alameda, and constitute a natural subject for a scenic tour. They should incorporated into a touring guidebook which could be used with all modes of travel - driving, walking or cycling. Many of the buildings are open to the public and the visitor may wish to examine their interiors as well. The following buildings should be included:

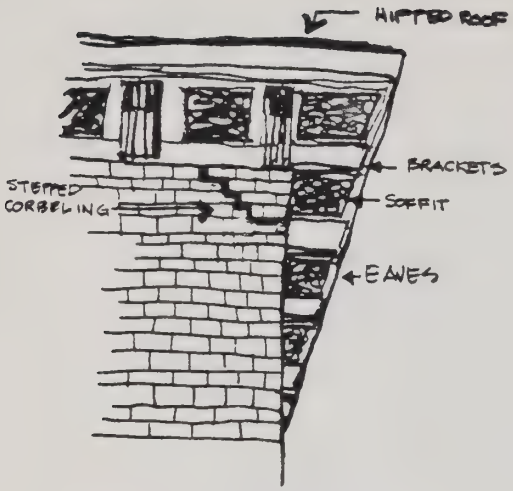
1. College of Alameda - Webster Street and Atlantic Avenue
2. Branch Library - Eighth Street and Santa Clara Avenue



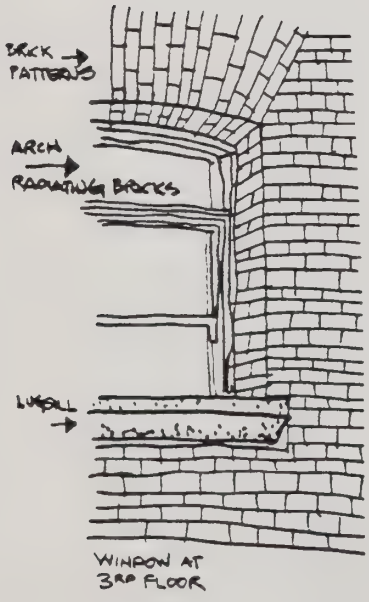
base



MAP 14. PUBLIC/INSTITUTIONAL BUILDINGS TOUR



cornices

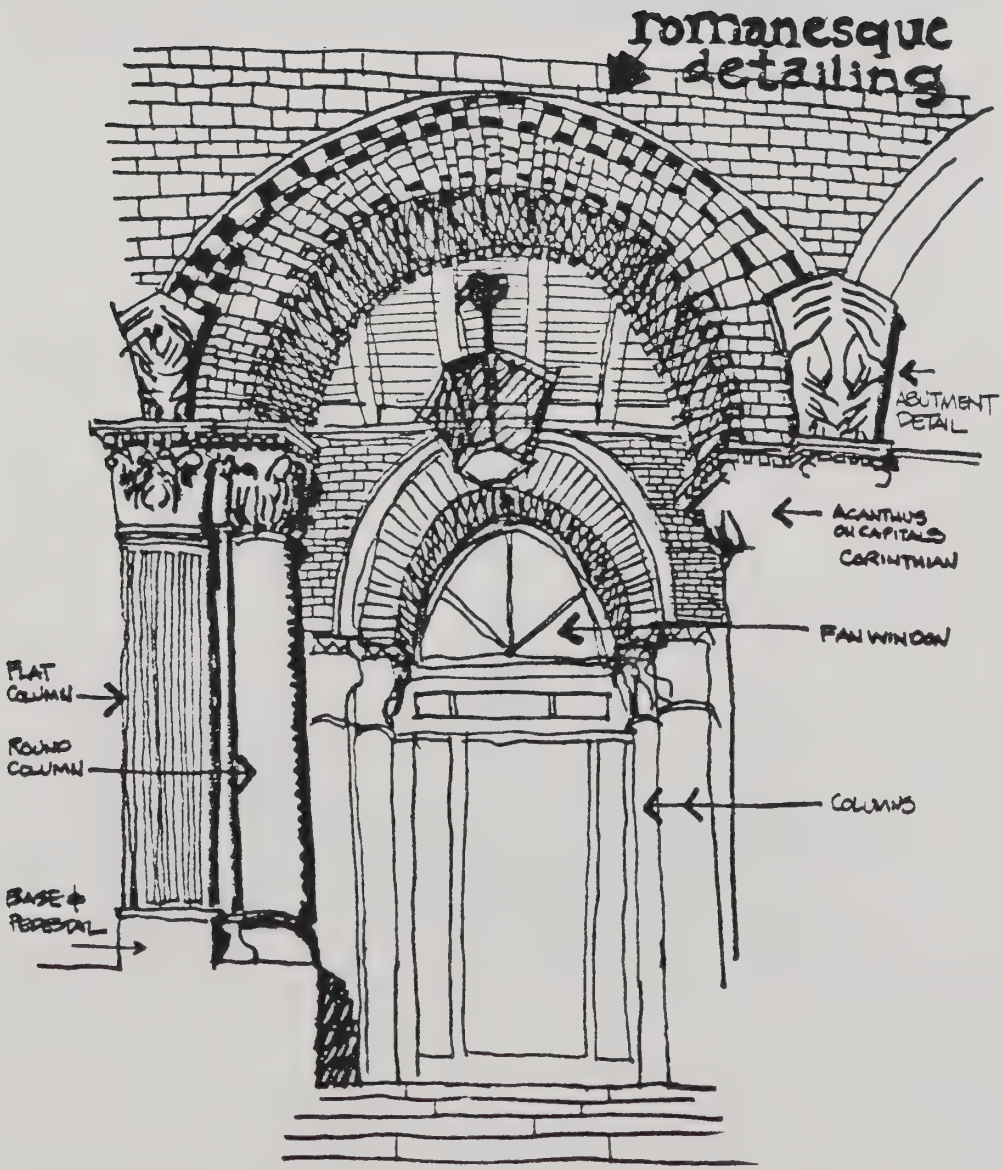


windows

3. Bureau of Electricity Power Station - Grand Street and Eagle Avenue
4. Boy Scout/Stephens Center - 1724 Santa Clara Avenue
5. Girls' Club - 1419 Union Street
6. Red Cross Building - 2017 Central Avenue
7. Immanual Lutheran Church - 1420 Lafayette Street
8. First Presbyterian Church - 2001 Santa Clara Avenue
9. First Congregational Church - Central Avenue and Chestnut Street
10. St. Joseph Basilica - 1109 Chestnut Street
11. Elks Club - 1255 Santa Clara Avenue
12. City Hall - Santa Clara Avenue and Oak Street
13. Main Library - 2264 Santa Clara Avenue
14. Alameda Theater - 2317 Central Avenue
15. Old Post Office - Central and Park Avenues
16. Masonic Temple - Park Street and Alameda Avenue

Recommendations

1. The City should encourage the preparation of a tour guidebook of its noteworthy public/institutional buildings.
2. The guidebook should include:
   a. A location map of all the structures
   b. A brief architectural and historical description of each one
   c. Selected photographs and illustrations
3. The City should retain the services of an architectural historian to assist in the preparation of the guidebook.


romanesque detailing
ABUTMENT DETAIL
ACANTHUS ON CAPITALS CORINTHIAN
FAN WINDOW
FLAT COLUMN
ROUND COLUMN
COLUMNS
BASE & PEDESTAL


FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

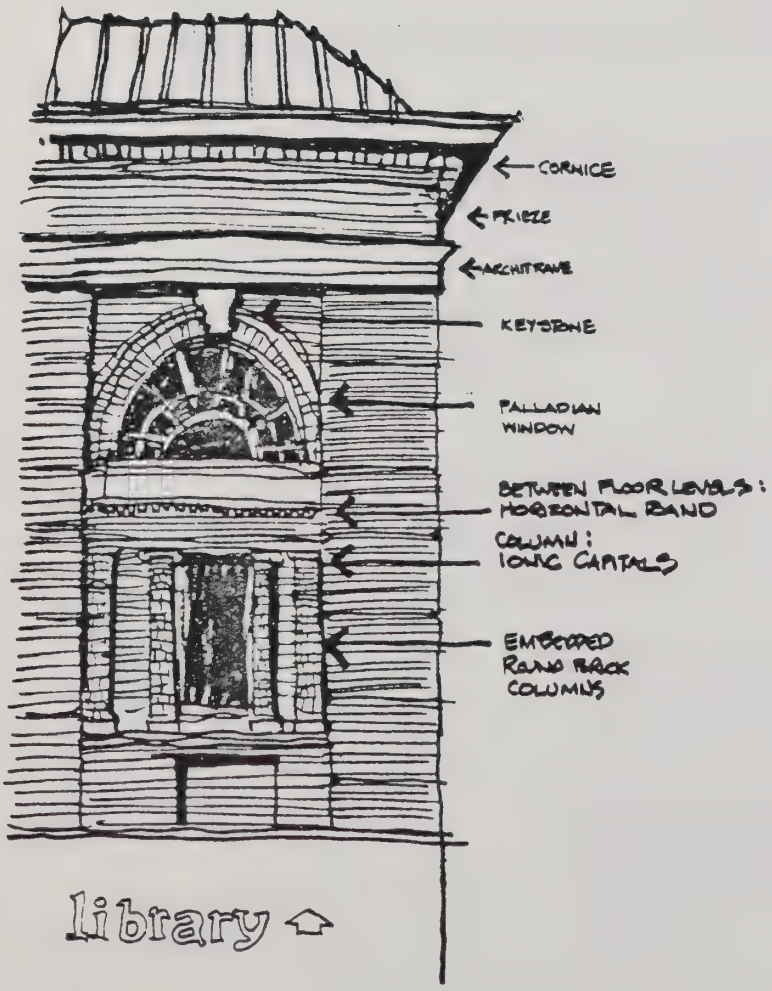

ALAMEDA
ALAMEDA THEATER

Recommendations

1. The City should encourage the preparation of a guidebook for Victorian walking tours, for distribution to the public.

2. The guidebook should include:
   a. An overview of the City's history.
   b. Discussions of the historical backgrounds of the tour neighborhoods.
   c. Maps of the four tours described herein.
   d. An architectural description of each structure identified.
   e. Selected photographs and/or illustrations.

3. The services of an architectural historian should be retained to verify the architectural descriptions in the original Walking Tour brochure.



FUTURE ADDITIONS TO THE SCENIC HIGHWAYS ELEMENT

There are a number of other features in Alameda, not previously discussed, which reflect the community's unique aesthetic qualities and are worthy of inclusion in a scenic route system. A number of these are suggested below. These projects would all require additional research and investigation before they could be included in the Scenic Highways Element.

The staff recommends that the Planning Board and the City Council endorse these projects as worthy of additional consideration. The staff will then include them as items to be covered under work programs in subsequent fiscal years.

1. A walking tour should be prepared for the Fernside district. This area includes a number of interesting styles of architecture (e.g., Mission Revival, California Bungalow, etc.), which are enhanced by a lovely residential setting. Considerable research and documentation will be needed before a tour guide can be prepared.

2. The presence of the Naval Air Station in Alameda provides a fine opportunity to experience and learn about Naval architecture. The City should capitalize on this fact by working with the Navy to institute a regularly scheduled tour. This would be mutually beneficial as it would allow visitors a chance to examine Navy ships, while the Navy would be afforded a regular forum for public relations and information dissemination.

3. The completion of Island Drive will provide a handsome gateway to Bay Farm Island. When that project is completed, Bay Farm Island should be considered for inclusion in the Scenic Driving Tour. Several of its contemporary residential developments have a high quality of architectural design and site planning, and are an interesting contrast to the older sections of the City.

4. The north side of Alameda has many blocks of attractive houses that reveal the scale of residential development occurring in the Victorian era. This area should become another of Alameda's Victorian walking tours. However, the architectural documentation of this area is limited and further research is necessary.

5. Alameda should capitalize upon its island setting through the preparation of a sailing tour guide around the City. It should indicate the restaurants, marinas, points of interest, etc. that are accessible by boat. The City's marine oriented enterprises might be willing to financially support such a brochure on a cooperative basis, and this possibility should be investigated.

6. This element should be used as a basis for a Scenic Drive Plan.

APPENDIX I: RATING SCHEDULE FOR SCENIC ROUTE

The following is employed by the State of California, Department of Transportation, District 4, in an unofficial capacity, to aid in their evaluation and recommendations of a proposed route for official State Scenic Highway designation.

RATING SCHEDULE FOR SCENIC ROUTE

I. GENERAL
1. Accessibility from Urban Areas
2. Access to Historical & Recreational Areas
3. Safety
4. Travel Speed
5. Diversity of Scenic Experience
6. Visual Impact

II. ROADSIDE ELEMENTS
1. Vista Points - Existing - Potential
2. Roadside Rests - Existing - Potential
3. Parking Pull-outs

III. NATURAL ELEMENTS
1. Water Bodies
2. Rock Outcroppings
3. Stands of Timber
4. Land Forms
5. Flora & Ground Cover

IV. AGRICULTURE
1. Vineyards
2. Orchards
3. Row Crops
4. Misc.

V. ANIMALS
1. Wildlife
2. Domestic

VI. MAN-MADE ELEMENTS
1. Bridges
2. Buildings
3. Signs
4. Utility Poles & Lines

VII. UNIQUE ELEMENTS OF OUTSTANDING SCENIC QUALITY

VIII. GENERAL REACTION
1. Distance Rating
2. Foreground Rating
3. Variety and Interest Rating

Total Rating _____

Scenic Route Potential _____

Legend: Element Rating, 0-2 Very Poor; 3-4 Poor; 5-6 Fair; 7-8 Good; 9-10 Outstanding

Route Potential, Very Poor, Poor, Fair, Good, Outstanding

APPENDIX I: RATING SCHEDULE FOR SCENIC ROUTE

The following is employed by the State of California, Department of Transportation, District 4, in an unofficial capacity, to aid in their evaluation and recommendations of a proposed route for official State Scenic Highway designation.

RATING SCHEDULE FOR SCENIC ROUTE

I. GENERAL
1. Accessibility from Urban Areas
2. Access to Historical & Recreational Areas
3. Safety
4. Travel Speed
5. Diversity of Scenic Experience
6. Visual Impact

II. ROADSIDE ELEMENTS
1. Vista Points - Existing
   - Potential
2. Roadside Rests - Existing
   - Potential
3. Parking Pull-outs

III. NATURAL ELEMENTS
1. Water Bodies
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Total Rating _____

Scenic Route Potential _____

Legend: Element Rating, 0-2 Very Poor; 3-4 Poor; 5-6 Fair; 7-8 Good; 9-10 Outstanding

Route Potential, Very Poor, Poor, Fair, Good, Outstanding

APPENDIX II: TRAFFIC VOLUME COUNTS

Twenty-four traffic counts for Alameda's entrances/exits.

Webster Street-Posey Tube

Inbound: 27,577 - March 11, 1975
Outbound: 22,867 - March 11, 1975

Park Street Bridge

Inbound: 13,117 - March 11, 1975
Outbound: 17,147 - March 11, 1975

Miller-Sweeney Bridge (Fruitvale)

Inbound: 8,924 - April 3, 1975
Outbound: 5,594 - April 3, 1975

High Street Bridge

Inbound: 7,217 - March 25, 1975
Outbound: 7,272 - March 25, 1975

Doolittle Drive - Alameda/Oakland City Limit

Inbound: 6,234 - February 12, 1974; 6,293 - August 27, 1975
Outbound: 6,294 - February 17, 1974

Bay Farm Island Bridge

Inbound: 9,555 - March 16, 1975
Outbound: 12,121 - March 16, 1975

Source: Engineering Department
City of Alameda
August 1975

APPENDIX III: ANALYSIS OF OAKLAND CHAMBER OF COMMERCE'S "SCENIC TOUR" THROUGH ALAMEDA

The Alameda "Scenic Tour" was designed to tie in with the Skyline Drive-Lake Merritt Tour through Oakland. This was intended to be a self-guided tour, so there are no tour guides of the route.

Start: Webster Street Tube. End: Alameda/Oakland City Limit

For detailed description of Webster Street Tube entrance and surrounding environs, see section on Gateways. The activities along Webster Street are initially industrial and institutional (College of Alameda) and then become residential (Makassar Straits Housing Project). At the Atlantic Avenue intersection the route becomes primarily a commercial area with a variety of fast-food, convenience type services, bars, liquor stores, banks, auto-oriented and other enterprises, many of which cater to Navy personnel. This thoroughfare is a confusing maze of signs, billboards, utility lines, and other non-thematic and non-complementary structures. Turning east onto Central Avenue, the immediate area is commercial. The land use then becomes residential on the north side, and open space, Washington Park, on the south side of Central Avenue. The presence of mature street trees makes this section visually quite amenable. Heading south on Eighth Street, one traverses a palm tree-lined road bordered by homes on the east and Washington Park on the west. The field converges into Westline Drive and the "scene from the road" combines a natural and urban setting of immense beauty. The road is abutted by Crown Memorial State and Regional Beach on the west and residential on the east side. San Francisco's skyline is visible in the distance. Along Shore Line Drive, there are apartments and condominiums on the north side and the beach on the south. Litter strews the beach and maintenance care is needed. Northward on Broadway is a pleasurable driving experience as the tree-lined residential area is traversed. Utility lines are present and obtrusive. Turning east onto Otis Drive, one passes by a residential area and Krusi Park. The utility lines severely intrude on one's field of vision. Crossing over the Bay Farm Island Bridge is generally pleasurable (see Gateways). Continuing along Doolittle Drive, the Alameda Municipal Golf Course provides a fine relief, while on the opposite side is the City Dump. In the distance is a picturesque scene of the Oakland-Alameda County Coliseum which is visible across the San Leandro Bay and framed by the Oakland hills.

Start: Alameda/Oakland City Limit. End: Posey Tube

Traveling the route in this direction generally reveals a similar and somewhat more scenic corridor. A few distinctions are an extended view of the San Francisco skyline, a longer sighting of Otis Drive, and approaching the Posey Tube exit, an expanded view of the Oakland skyline.

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